Quality of Working Life - An Exploration of Contributing Factors and their Relative Salience to Employees

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An Exploration of Contributing Factors and their Relative Salience to Employees

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List of Abbreviations

ACIRRT: Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training

AMA: American Management Association

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

CIPD: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

DWP: Department for Work and Pensions

EFA: Exploratory Factor Analysis

ERI: Effort-Reward Imbalance model

GfK NOP: Growth from Knowledge

HSE: Health and Safety Executive

HSL: Health and Safety Laboratory

I.T: Information Technology

JDC: Job Demand-Control model

JDCS: Job Demand-Control-Support model

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

KMO: Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure

LMX: Leader-Member exchange

MIS: Management Information Systems

NCDS: National Child Development Survey

NHS: National Health Service

ONS: Office for National Statistics

PASW: Predictive Analysis Software

PCA: Principal Components Analysis

POS: Perceived Organisational Support

PwC: PricewaterhouseCoopers

QoL: Quality of Life

QoWL: Quality of Working Life

SEC: Socio-Economic Classification

SES: Socio-Economic Status

SIC: Standard Industrial Classification

SWB: Subjective Well-Being

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

WLB: Work-Life Balance

Abstract

The academic study of Quality of Working Life (QoWL) has a long tradition, vestiges of which are apparent in the classic job satisfaction and employee motivation research (see for example, Mayo and Warner, 1931; Maslow, 1943; 1932; Blauner 1964; Hertzberg, 1966). The intervening years have witnessed the accumulation of a broad, complex and, at times contradictory, literature relating to variables identified as impacting on QoWL. The potential value of investing in enhancing QoWL cannot be underestimated. Indeed, enhanced QoWL has been associated with a wide range of positive business benefits, including (but not limited to) improved business performance, greater employee creativity, enhanced employee commitment to the organisation, reduced intention to quit and lower levels of sickness absence. For employees, enhanced QoWL has been implicated in reducing work-home conflict, increasing job satisfaction and reducing physical and psychological ill-health. In short, there are compelling reasons why QoWL should be the subject of further scrutiny and exploration. Indeed, from the perspective of application, while illuminating, it might be concluded that the breadth and complexity of findings has had the effect of sponsoring inertia, rather than action on the part of many employers.

A further observation is that, methodologically, very few studies to date, have been firmly rooted in employee perspectives. Rather, the mainstream approach is characterisable as top-down and based upon correlational evidence; with each new study either tending to add detail as a product of a narrow and specific focus and/or simply adding to the list of salient variables. In recognition of this, this thesis set out to re-focus on core components of high salience to employees. This was achieved though the adoption of a mixed methods approach, that commenced with a qualitative investigation of employee accounts of variables impacting on QoWL. To provide a degree of verification and examine the generalisability of these findings a second more structured study was carried out, involving the development of an employee questionnaire suitable for Principal Component Analysis. Lastly, a third, complementary investigation used the method of paired comparisons to test the relative salience of headline influences on employee QoWL.

The key research objectives overall were firstly, to undertake a qualitative exploration and characterisation of employee perspectives on variables that impact upon QoWL and to discover how, and in what ways, these variables are important to employees (Study 1). Secondly, to undertake a quantitative study, based on a large and diverse sample of employees, to examine

the factor structure of headline influences on QoWL to verify and confirm the findings from Study 1 (Study 2a). Following on from this, the objective was to explore and provide comment on the scope for developing an organisational psychometric measure with the capacity to profile employee ratings of QoWL (Study 2b). And finally, to determine the relative salience of core components of QoWL and explore the degree to which employees share a common perspective in this respect (Study 3).

Rooted in employee perspectives, Study 1 provided insight into not only which variables are important, but how and in what ways they are salient to employees. This qualitative insight revealed a high degree of parity in what employees perceived as important in determining their QOWL, with emergent themes relating to peer relationships, relationships with one's manager, perceptions of the degree to which the organisation supports it employees, ability to work flexibly and working hours, opportunities for career progression and development, fair treatment and drawing satisfaction from one's work, all common points for discussion across the sample.

Study 2 set out to triangulate on these findings, but also afforded the opportunity to discover new linkages and combinations of variables. Accordingly, within this study a Principal Component Analysis performed on the data produced six interpretable and nameable constructs with high face validity that accounted for 58.4% of the total variance, the output from which was used as the basis for development of a 45-item proto-scale, representing the following constructs: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction; Work-Life Balance*. The constructs were mapped back onto the themes emergent in Study 1 and reflected broad parity with the themes. Exploration of the data by age, Socio-Economic Status (SES) and gender revealed significant differences in relation to attitudes to *Work-Life Balance* and *Job Satisfaction* across the three demographic groupings, indicating that a 'one size fits all' approach to enhancing QoWL may not be appropriate.

In an effort to gain greater understanding of the relative salience of QoWL constructs, the Method of Paired Comparison (Thurstone, 1927) was utilised (Study 3), and a psychophysical scale of QoWL constructs was generated. Results indicated the relative primacy of *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life*. Tests of demographic differences by employment sector revealed some evidence indicative of shared perspectives over the relative salience of components of QoWL.

Taken together, the homogeneity of constructs identified using a variety of different methods lends confidence to having identified a set of headline QoWL components. These are considered

to be: *Reward and Recognition; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction; and, Work-Life Balance;* which, while these components are not claimed to be exhaustive or definitive, they do appear to be both meaningful and salient to employees. A more fundamental finding seems to be that the salience of these constructs to employees appears to be determined by their relative paucity/absence, rather than reflecting satiation, indicating a model of attrition, whereby the absence of such components of QoWL results in employee dissatisfaction.

In conclusion, the research presented here represents an exploration of aspects of QoWL most salient to employees evolving from a perspective grounded in employee perspectives (Study 1). Study 2a offers the basis for future development of a QoWL measure intended to enable organisations to assess the current level of QoWL, such that investment can be targeted to enhance those areas highlighted as lacking, with additional insight (Study 2b) into where demographic differences may need to be taken into consideration in the application of QoWL interventions. Study 3 represents the first of its kind in the application of the Method of Paired Comparison in relation to QoWL and offers insight into the degree of parity across demographics in relation to the relative salience of QoWL components to employees.

Overall, the degree of demographic diversity of participants within this study is considered a key strength of this research; most previous QoWL studies having been limited to single organisations/occupational groups. Whilst the insights gained are considered to be of relevance to employees, but of greatest salience to public policy makers, employers and employee representatives in targeting QoWL related interventions for maximum impact, both to the organisation and to employees.

Chapter 1: Overview of Methodology

1.0 Introduction

The study of Quality of Working Life (QoWL) has been the subject of empirical investigation for a number of decades. However, there remains no universally accepted definition of the term and significant debate over its boundaries.

One cannot wonder that businesses might find the thought of 'tackling' QoWL within their organisation daunting. The plethora of research articles relating to different aspects, outcomes and business types with relation to QoWL seems to be an ever expanding pool offering little clarity or guidance over what is important, to whom, in what way(s), or how to tackle it. Continued research into this arena seems to simply generate greater complexity, through the identification of influences and claimed (usually negative) outcomes rather than shedding further light on the established influences. The existing tools are often in the form of lengthy surveys e.g. Hackman and Oldham's (1975) 100 item Job Diagnostic Survey - and, arguably, are based on the researcher presumption that they know what is important to employees in terms of the right topics to explore and the right items to include. The data collected through the administration of such surveys then presents another hurdle: how to prioritise the findings? How can the relative salience of the QoWL variables presented be assessed? How might one know which to 'tackle' first?

Furthermore, once the organisation has administered such a survey, there remain significant evidence gaps over the approach to intervention, with little in the way of clear guidance on exactly what to do with the information leaving the organisation with the task of being seen to be acting on the feedback, but unsure of quite what to do for the best in response to it. This disconnect between theory and practical application seemingly plagues QoWL research and, without resolution, leaves organisations adrift when it comes to how they might enhance QoWL within their workforce. One might ask, what is the purpose of exploring QoWL if not for the benefit of the organisation and its employees? And if research provides no practical benefit – no guidance, no direction – is it worth the investment of time and funding? While it is acknowledged that understanding a topic is fundamental in and of itself, as well as in facilitating the development of guidance and interventions, the disconnect between theory and practice in this area remains significant and under articulated.

With a view to progressing the state of current knowledge in this area, the research reported in this thesis begins by taking a step back in the process of enquiry, starting by grounding the

approach to empirical investigation in employee perspectives. It then proceeds to distil these variables into a quantitative survey and drill down to the fundamental elements of QoWL. Finally, these elements are used as the basis for exploring the relative salience of identified components. This research does not attempt to definitively characterise QoWL, but to provide some clear direction to organisations as to which variables are important to employees and why; which if appropriately addressed, might deliver significant improvements in the employee experience.

1.1 Overview

The research reported here begins with a review of the published findings on QoWL and allied literatures. Reflecting the core research aim of focusing on employee perspectives on variables impacting on QoWL, empirical components take the form of a combined methods approach. This chapter outlines the aims and objectives of this thesis and the arising methodological issues.

QoWL as a concept lacks consensus over both its definition and constituent components. There are a range of perspectives regarding what impacts on QoWL. These encompass, but are not limited to, individual differences, aspects of job design, job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic), biopsychosocial elements, leadership style and organisational culture and climate, as well as aspects of the physical working environment. Like other topics within the health, work and well-being domain, this is an area of different and competing perspectives about contributory elements and where effort should be concentrated to address QoWL. This presents a notable challenge from the perspective of application of findings through intervention in the workplace.

Almost all previous studies of QoWL have been limited to discrete components, or based on discrete (sub) populations, e.g. single professions or work organisations. Methodologically, for the most part, they are characterisable as top down, rather than being rooted in employee perspectives. A central premise of this thesis is that the amassed findings have had the effect of blurring the focus on core contributory influences on QoWL, an arising consequence being that the resulting complexity risks sponsoring inertia or a focus on peripheral elements amongst employers, policy makers and employee representatives with an interest in intervention in this area. The study reported here seeks to produce a sharper focus on employee perspectives over headline contributory influences, and aims to achieve this by grounding the investigation in employee perspectives. In this respect, the aim of the study was not so much to discover new concepts, but to refine and discover the relative importance of identified influences on QoWL,

and explore the degree to which employees of different types exhibit a homogeneous perspective, and/or the extent to which shared experience impacts on employee orientations.

1.1.2 Aim

To identify and characterise key influences on QoWL, their relative salience and impact on employee orientations to work and the scope for profiling organisational practice/performance in meeting employee aspirations.

1.1.3 Objectives

- Characterise employee perspectives on variables impacting on employee QoWL
- Characterise the factor structure of headline influences on QoWL
- Explore the extent to which employee ratings of variables impacting on QoWL vary by shared experience/orientation, referenced to a range of headline employment demographics, e.g. by sector, gender and age
- Explore the relative salience of headline influences of QoWL and the degree of shared perspective amongst employees.

Following a review of dedicated QoWL and related literatures (Chapter 2) the resulting empirical components of the study comprised three complementary studies. A combined methods approach was adopted. Study 1 (Chapter 3) was a qualitative investigation into employee perspectives on variables impacting QoWL. Here, a thematic analysis was used to identify and characterise the salient components. In addition to providing insight into not just *what*, but *how, why* and *which ways* the identified components were of high salience to respondents. This analysis, informed by published findings, was used as the basis for developing a questionnaire suitable for quantitative analysis, in Study 2 (Chapter 4). The objective was to produce a data set suitable for multivariate analysis, in particular Principal Components Analysis, in order to confirm, and/or further refine the qualitative findings from Study 1. The final study set out to explore respondents' views regarding the relative salience of variables identified as headline influences on QoWL, and to test the degree to which employees share a common perspective on this.

1.2 Method

1.2.1 Why a Mixed Method Approach?

Debate surrounding the relative merits of quantitative and qualitative research are long established, and frequently entrenched. Advocates of qualitative approaches (see for example, Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Schwandt, 2000) argue that the researcher cannot be entirely detached from the research and that cause and effect will always be, to some degree, indiscernible (the constructivist, or relativist approach). As a result, discovering meaning and understanding requires a more empathetic and probing approach than can be achieved through using quantitative methods, i.e. it is important to understand not just what people believe, or the strength of their attitudes, but to gain insight into how and why people have come believe what they believe, and the basis/rationale for their orientations and behaviour. By contrast, proponents of quantitative methods tend to stress the importance of objectivity, sample representativeness and statistical testability of, (particularly, but not necessarily hypothesised) relationships, (see for example, Maxwell and Delaney, 2004; Schrag, 1992). Pragmatists, by contrast tend to stress that choices over method should primarily be driven by the nature of the research question. However, detractors from this position tend to point to issues of tension and incompatibility, in instances where combined methods approaches are adopted. The Incompatibility Thesis (Howe, 1988) posits that those who assert that qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry cannot be used as complimentary tools, base their assertion on the epistemological origins of the methodologies (interpretivism and positivism, respectively) that are in, and of, themselves discordant (Howe, 2009).

However, when taken in isolation both methods of enquiry pose possible limitations to the researcher, for example, quantitative 'purists' tend to contend that science is about confirming, or falsifying a hypothesis through objective measurement and interpretation. In this they tend to underplay the inherent subjectivity arising from the fact that the decisions made in the design, procedure, analysis and interpretation of research are prone to reflect attitudes, beliefs and social influence (Onwuegbuzie, 2002).

Proponents of a mixed methods approach lay claim to this strategy allowing the researcher to take advantage of the strengths of qualitative modes of enquiry that enable the generation of hypotheses and exploration of issues without necessarily having *a priori* assumptions in place. Application of quantitative modes of enquiry then enable testing of generated hypotheses and further validation of the analysis, and this is the view taken in the research presented here. Thus, the strengths of each method are exploited and the potential weaknesses diminished, as

commented by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie "The goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of both" (2004; p. 14).

1.2.2 The Researcher's Conundrum

As with all psychological and sociological enquiry there exists the question of the impact on the subject of the scrutiny of the researcher – to what degree can the answers we unearth be taken to be representative of the true beliefs, values and behaviours of our object of scrutiny? Can we reasonably expect the focus of our enquiry to engage with us as the researcher and respond to our whim? These are enduring philosophical and epidemiological debates, not for the realms of this literature review. However, Taylor (1977) does comment on this very conundrum, discussing an example whereby job satisfaction measures showed high satisfaction, but absenteeism, sabotage and industrial action among other things, had increased, in apparent direct conflict with the job satisfaction survey findings. Taylor presents an action research approach involving 'subjects' of the research in the measurement, citing conclusions drawn by Davis (1971) that "information about values, concerns, fears and ambitions cannot be obtained at arm's length. It is privileged information, and as such requires a collaborative and trusting relationship between the worker and the investigator" (p247, cited Taylor, 1977). Taylor (1977) suggests that employees rate job satisfaction relative to something else, whether it is because needs are fulfilled, it is better than other jobs, it has become more tolerable over time and so forth. Furthermore Taylor questions how much information the average worker will share with the "middle class researchers" that typically present themselves asking for cooperation.

Taylor (1977) leaves us, as researchers with a rather pessimistic view, commenting that "no hope can be held that a questionnaire can include all elements of importance to all employees, either over time or over organisations" (p250). He goes on to list the limitations of information collected through the use of surveys, and concludes that only a measure developed by researchers, managers and workforce collaboratively has any hope of gathering information that reflects the reality of job satisfaction. This would of course, require an individual, bespoke approach to each and every assessment which is undoubtedly beyond the budget of most research projects.

1.2.3 Three stages of data gathering

1.2.3.1 Study 1 – Focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews exploring employee perceptions of factors that influence QoWL

This first study explored the variables that employees perceive as having an impact on their QoWL, through the complementary use of focus group and one-to-one discussions, with a view to characterising these accounts with reference to a set of themed constructs.

Qualitative methods of data collection are increasingly popular in organisations and social policy research. However, as Oppenheim (2000) points out, their use is far from universal, it remains the case that "in some societies the concept of a social research interview either does not exist or is vigorously resisted" (p65). There are, undoubtedly, difficulties in conducting research of this nature in terms of the effect that simply being involved in the process might have on participant responses. Furthermore, the interviewer must take steps to "'switch off' their own personality and attitudes... ...and try to be unaffected by circumstances, by their attitude to the topic or the respondent, or by personal involvement" (p66). Despite these potential pitfalls, this method of data gathering, when done well, allows the researcher to build later quantitative studies on a solid knowledge foundation drawn from the source about which they wish to gain greater understanding. Methodologically, the use of focus groups and one-to-one interviews conducted in Study 1 contrasted with previous research activity in this domain, which has been largely hypothesis driven and quantitative. Oppenheim (2000) describes the purpose of the exploratory qualitative research as "...essentially heuristic: to develop ideas and research hypotheses rather than to gather facts and statistics. It is concerned with trying to understand how ordinary people think and feel about the topics of concern to the research" (p67). It was to this end that the method was employed in Study 1 of the current research.

While no claim is made that the approach adopted should be characterised as grounded theory (see Glaser and Straus, 1967), the adoption of an approach grounded in employee perspectives enabled the researcher to approach the topic from a perspective of generating theoretical informed insights (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; p3) the outcomes of which afforded a detailed insight into employee perspectives, while also providing a strong empirical grounding for the later quantitative studies. Kitzinger (1995) states that "Tapping into such a variety of communication is important because peoples' knowledge and attitudes are not entirely encapsulated in reasoned responses to direct questions. Everyday forms of communication such as anecdotes, jokes or loose word association may tell us *as much*, if not *more*, about what people 'know'" (p109). Kitzinger continues on to say that "in this sense focus groups 'reach the parts that other methods cannot reach' – revealing dimensions of understanding that often

remain untapped by the more conventional one-to-one interview or questionnaire" (p109). As such, Study 1 does not use grounded theory as presented by Glaser and Strauss (1967), but as a means of conducting a study that is grounded in its subject matter (employees), and aims to derive insights from how employees articulate their perspectives on variables that impact on QoWL.

1.2.3.2 Study 2 – A questionnaire study of employees' perceptions of factors influencing QoWL

Given the objective of exploring the construct structure and the robustness and generalisability of findings from Study 1 a self-report questionnaire was developed.

Although a questionnaire based method is an oft adopted approach to the measurement of QoWL the questionnaire items were configured such that they reflected and mapped onto the constructs identified in Study 1. Purposively, the items were constructed in such a way that they closely reflected the manner in which respondents articulated issues impacting on their QoWL. The terminology used for the questions was designed to reflect the phraseology and terminology used by respondents, including, where configurable, direct quotes and paraphrases used in their accounts. Reflecting the objective of detecting a finite set of defining constructs, the format selected was a battery of statements, to which respondents were invited to rate their degree of agreement, using a five point rating scale.

The statements were generated though collating transcript evidence that related to the themes and constituent facets identified in Study 1 and generating, for each, questions that reflected the attitudes, beliefs and sentiments expressed by respondents. A limitation here was the need to keep the total number of questions generated within the bounds of what could realistically be achieved in a self-complete questionnaire.

The objective of achieving a demographically diverse sample was addressed through the adoption of a compendium sampling strategy. This comprised of a series of strategies; targeting companies known to the researcher and requesting they send out a link to the survey; attending two conferences and handing out hard copies of the survey to attendees; posting the survey link on FaceBook and LinkedIn; writing a blog to raise awareness of the research. This resulted in a diverse sample of responses representing a wide range of industries, job roles and sectors. While remaining an opportunity sample, this approach provided a degree of demographic diversity, in terms of employment sector, job grade, job role, age and gender, absent from almost all known previous studies of QoWL.

Study 2 was designed to:

- provide an element of validation and increase the confidence in the findings from Study 1;
- through formal testing, explore differences between groups of employees with regard to their rating of the components, to gain an insight into the effects of a range of shared demographic characteristics;
- explore the scope for identified constructs to form a sound basis for a set of construct scales that might be configured, with suitable further development (outside the scope of this thesis), to produce a QoWL Workplace Climate Measure;
- inform the selection of variables for exploring the relative salience of QoWL components in Study 3.

1.2.3.3 Study 3 – the Method of Paired Comparison

The final study set out to explore the relative salience of QoWL components to employees and to explore the degree to which individuals sharing a common demographic shared a common perspective on this. The set of components was derived from insights arising from Studies 1 and 2. In recognition of the limitations of direct ranking, notably in the area of reproducibility reliability and the desire to establish the relative salience of components, rather than their respective order, a more sophisticated approach was sought. Following the consideration of the relative merits of alterative ranking techniques, Thurstone's Case V (1927) method of Paired Comparison was selected. The rationale underpinning this was that paired comparisons provides a ratio scale, i.e. it provides an indication of the relative distance in psychophysical space between each component, which provides a stronger indication of salience than direct ranking or numerical rating. A strength is that it is a constant method, which provides the facility for formal testing of the constituency/reducibility (Kendall's *K*) of responses and the degree of agreement (Kendall's *W*) between respondents. Importantly, Kendall's *K* permits formal testing of whether individuals can discriminate between the items of interest. Where it can be established that respondents make reliable reproducible distinctions this adds confidence to the conclusion that the items are meaningful to respondents, rather than being vague or ambiguous. These features are either absent or time consuming to configure in alternative ranking/rating techniques. The method has been shown to be robust for ranking a wide range of phenomena for which the stimulus intensity is unknown. It is also simple to perform, involving the presentation of items in pairs, for all permutations of pairings. For each pairing the respondent was simply

asked which of each item had greater salience in relation to their QoWL. By assigning each item a value (or level of salience) along a continuum relative specifically to the item set, the method of Paired Comparison aims to measure that which might otherwise be considered immeasurable.

The strengths of the Paired Comparison method lie in its ability to not only derive a reliable rank order of items, but also to calculate the relative salience of items on a psychophysical scale. The aim of the study was to establish if there exists broad universality in the relative salience of constructs, such that the resulting order of QoWL related items might be used by organisations as a guide to how best to prioritise which aspects of employee QoWL to address first for greatest potential gain. Differences between rankings by demographic groups have also been calculated.

1.2.4 Rationale for the approach

The research purposively used a mixed methods approach, with the quantitative survey in Study 2 proving an element of triangulation and validation of qualitative findings from Study 1, with the additional benefit of having been performed on a large and potentially more representative sample. It is argued that grounding the content and configuration of the question set used in Study 2 on the interpretation of employee accounts in Study 1 provided a sharper focus on what is important to employees and an empirically sounder basis upon which to configure the attitude questionnaire than more traditional theoretically based top-down approaches. Findings from Studies 1 and 2, referenced to established insights from published findings were fundamental to the generation of the item set used in Study 3 to determine the relative salience of components of QoWL.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

The subject of Quality of Working Life (hereafter QoWL) is broad, laden with complexity and, as a result has, been conceptualised and approached in many different ways. As such, there is no single definition of what is encompassed by the term and no strong consensus over contributory influences, or their relative salience. This leaves work organisations with a difficult task: there may be moral arguments as to why employers should seek to address employee QoWL, there may even be a business case, but how should they go about it, which aspects should they address? And what action should be taken?

Academic, political and literary commentaries on QoWL and impacts on employee well-being have a history dating back to, at least, the early industrial period (see for example, Dickens, 1854: *Hard Times*; Zola, 1885: *Germinal*; Engels, 1887: *Condition of the Working Class*). Mainstream academic interest is perhaps best cast as a post-world war two phenomena that has gathered pace since the late 1960. Davis (1977), for example, reports growing interest in the quality of the relationship between the worker and his [sic] working environment "...the human dimension so often forgotten among the technical and economic factors in job design" (Davis, 1977, p53). However, despite significant academic interest in QoWL and the related concept of employee well-being, there may be grounds for concluding that Davis's observation, has "...become a kind of depository for a variety of sometimes contradictory meanings attributed to it by different groups" (Davis 1977, p53) and that it still holds true.

Conceptualising the array of variables with potential to influence QoWL is a broad and complex undertaking, which extends to the consideration of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Warr, 2002). For Warr, good QoWL enhances the intrinsic factor 'job related affective well-being', defined as "peoples' feelings about themselves in relation to their job" (Warr, 2002, p.1). This, he claims, has traditionally been conceptualised in relation to seven constituent extrinsic factors – satisfaction with: pay; colleagues; supervisors; working conditions; job security; promotion prospects; training opportunities. However, the numerous definitions and interpretations of what QoWL is and what it encompasses reflects limited consensus. Some authors have even gone so far as to cast the concept as a victim of "managerial faddism syndrome" (Nadler and Lawler, 1983. p20), with no clear definition of the scope or conditions under which interventions can be expected to succeed. The latter go on to lay claim to providing this *missing perspective,* in advancing three components said to be key to improving QoWL: participative working

practices, whereby all levels of the organisation are engaged in configuring the design of work; management structures that encourage and support QoWL projects; and, changes in the behaviour of senior managers to ensure that QoWL projects are perceived as credible throughout the organisation. These components are said to be "interdependent and [should] ideally support each other" (Nadler and Lawler, 1983; p.30). The review will now proceed by examining the evolution of the concept of QoWL in academic accounts, it will also explore and articulate linkages to related literatures.

The review does not claim to be exhaustive, given the breadth and complexity of perspectives that have been identified as being of relevance to QoWL, rather it seeks to articulate headline emergent facets of QoWL identified within the extant literature.

2.1 Foundation insights

In some degree the Scientific Management tradition, in particular its Fordist manifestations, can perhaps be cast a key fillip for sponsoring academic interest in QoWL. The widespread adoption of Taylor's thinking served to kindle academic and managerial interest in emergent dis-benefits; a significant proportion of which came to be attributed to poor QoWL, but in the early period was more routinely cast as eroded intrinsic job satisfaction. Critics pointed to rising costs due to high staff turnover, rising wage demands, greater industrial conflict, low intrinsic job satisfaction and modest organisational commitment (see, for example, Blauner 1964; Goldthorpe and Lockwood, 1968; Braverman, 1974). This one dimensional approach to employee motivation proved inadequate in satisfying worker needs for social experience and autonomy over their working life, evident by the high turnover of staff at the Ford factory. However, the impact of the Fordism inspired a generation of research into the impact of financial reward on various aspects of employee satisfaction and organisational performance.

Reflecting the foundation work by Maslow (1954), the Needs Satisfaction perspective posits that individuals experience self-actualisation (essentially, high QoWL) through the satisfaction of their physical, social and socio-technical workplace needs; the greater the satisfaction of these aspects of their work/working environment, the greater the employees' sense of good QoWL having been achieved. Efraty and Sirgy (1990) for example, hold that employees aspire to have their needs met and the closer the work environment (physical, social and socio-technical) comes to achieving this, the more positive their perception of QoWL. These authors advance a conceptual model that characterises four groups of needs: (i) Survival needs; (ii) Social needs; (iii) Ego needs; and (iv) Self-actualisation needs (reflecting Maslow's Hierarchy

of Needs, 1954). A central premise is that the lower the level of needs satisfaction, the less the individual will identify with the organisation, hence the lower their level of commitment to and intrinsic engagement with their work and, hence, the lower their productivity. From this perspective, it has become popular to cast traditional Fordist arrangements as the epitome of failing to address higher order needs; a number of authors claiming evidence of associated poor industrial relations as reflecting this (Blauner, 1964; Goldthorpe and Lockwood, 1968).

2.1.1 Financial and Non-Financial Reward

Rewards in the work context can take varying forms – financial rewards, in terms of pay and other monetary incentives, or non-financial rewards such as increased job responsibility, development opportunities or career advancement opportunities and are distinct from intrinsic rewards inherent to the work undertaken. Non-financial components extend to normative rewards, e.g. recognition of employee effort/performance by the organisation and its managers, which can be both formal and informal.

Much of the research in relation to the impact of financial reward focusses on what an organisation might gain/lose as a result of offering such rewards to its staff, but a proportion has also explored the impact on aspects of QoWL (Baker *et al.* 1988; Jenkins and Gupta, 1982; Locke *et al.* 1992; Skaggs *et al.* 1992). Opinions in relation to the relative merits, or otherwise, of financial rewards systems are mixed and the picture is far from clear. Financial reward has been credited with performance improvement (Bucklin and Dickinson, 2001; Lazear, 2000), reducing job dissatisfaction and communicating recognition and status to employees (Baker *et al.* 1988; Locke *et al.* 1992; Opsahl and Dunette, 1996). However, financial rewards have also been found to reduce intrinsic motivation, by removing employee focus from the pleasure of engaging in the work, to the end result, i.e. the money (Eisenberger and Cameron, 1996; Frey and Jegen, 2001). Financial rewards have been found to stifle creativity (Kohn, 1993b, Eastman, 2009) and increase risk aversion (where there is a risk of loss of financial reward) as employees focus on doing just what is required to achieve the cash pay-out (Kohn, 1993a). While more intrinsic motivators, like recognition, are thought to enhance creativity (Eastman, 2009) and have been shown to have a significant (although low) relationship with satisfaction and motivation (Danish and Usman, 2010). It has also been suggested that employee-supervisor relationships can suffer as a result of financial reward systems, as failure to achieve the financial reward can be interpreted as a punishment and problems e.g. product quality and risk taking behaviour, may be hidden from managers where they threaten the realisation of rewards. A potentially corrosive corollary here has been said to be increasing mistrust and inhibited

communication between line-managers and employees (Kohn, 1993b). While Kohn (1993) vehemently opposes the use of financial incentives to motivate employees, his review of the research focuses primarily on the influence of reward on product quality and productivity, rather than on QoWL.

Arguably, pay in relation to job satisfaction captures the heart of Hertzberg's 'Dual-Factor Theory' when considered in relation to classical Taylorist arrangements. The history of the Ford motor company following the introduction of production line technology in the early 20th Century, as caricatured by Chaplin in 'Modern Times' (1936), witnessed an array of tensions between management and labour, widely attributed to the associated socio-technical arrangement. Despite the high wages offered by Ford, turnover amongst production line workers was high and industrial relations were often adversarial, this generally being attributed to the alienating nature of the work, and relatively high wage levels (for unskilled workers) being insufficient to offset this, at least those opting to leave the organisation. There are claims that the extrinsic reward of higher pay failed to compensate for lack of control over the speed of production and noisy, inhospitable working conditions that inhibited communication, group cohesion and the sacrifice of intrinsic satisfaction gained through more traditional, intrinsically more meaningful, less fragmented and less regimented configurations of work (e.g. Gratton, 2011). Satisfaction with intrinsic rewards has been found to be more strongly associated with greater job involvement and affective commitment than satisfaction with extrinsic rewards (O'Driscoll and Randall, 1999). If considered in relation to the psychological contract (essentially an instrumentalist) approach to working life, it becomes a trade-off – whereby an individual will have a limit as to what they will accept in terms of what they might expect to gain and to compromise in a given job. This trade-off is also influenced by societal expectations in relation to what is desirable, or otherwise, and this too will influence what satisfaction individuals seek from their working life (see Watson, 1995). In the case of the Ford factories, although the high wages offered to labourers seemed attractive, the trade-off in terms of the intrinsic satisfaction sacrificed for these wages, proved too much for many.

More recent research also suggests that pay is not the most effective means of enhancing job satisfaction (e.g. Allen, 1992; Dewhurst *et al.* 2009) and is not necessarily related to job satisfaction in and of itself, but may positively influence job satisfaction when employees compare their wage rate favourably with others of a similar job level/role, i.e. in the sense of social comparison (Watson *et al.* 1996). Whilst it has been indicated that performance related pay can enhance employee performance (Lazear, 2000; Paarsch and Shearer, 2000), as can piece work and other forms of effort-related pay, such as production bonuses (Lazear, 2000; Oettinger, 2001; Brown and Sessions, 2003), findings are far from universally positive with

implications that it can result in job dissatisfaction, as well as causing quality and safety standards to suffer as production/goal achievement pressure increases (see, for example, Freeman and Kleiner, 2005). Complementary findings are that while financial incentives can motivate high performers, their use can also demotivate employees who fall short of targets/receive low value rewards (Kennedy, 1995). Schemes can also, inadvertently, create negative competition and undermine social cohesiveness (Drago and Garvey, 1998) but, if considered 'fair', can enhance job satisfaction (Brown, 2001).

Findings on workgroup or team level performance related pay are mixed. Some authors point to enhanced cohesiveness, as a feature of successful teams (Heywood *et al.* 2005; Verbeke *et al.* 2008), whereas others highlight corrosive effects and poor social relations, e.g. due to excessive negative peer pressure and resentment, with negative impacts on job satisfaction (Kandel and Lazear, 1992; Weyman and Boocock, 2014), a key component thought to be the perceived fairness of the reward distribution amongst team members (Honeywell-Johnson and Dickinson, 1999). Team incentives have also been shown to enhance group cohesion as employees 'pull together' to achieve their goal and attain the reward (Honeywell-Johnson and Dickinson, 1999), while individual incentives, if not carefully structured, can have a destabilising effect on teamwork through the introduction of too high a degree of competition (Dur and Sol, 2008).

Conversely, extrinsic rewards have been cited by some as having a positive effect on job satisfaction (Baker *et al.* 1988; Kalleberg, 1977; Opsahl and Dunette, 1996; Wayne *et al.* 2002), whilst additionally there are claims that "…for any given level of a reward, there will be variation in job satisfaction produced by the variation in the value of that reward" (Kalleberg, 1977; p133). The degree of control an employee feels they have over the attainment of rewards is also said to be important (Kalleberg, 1977). Furthermore, there is evidence that rewards can enhance perceived organisational support (POS) when they are interpreted as discretionary on the part of the organisation; a symbol of recognition, appreciation, or investment by the organisation; or meaningful to that employee specifically (Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Shore, 1995) and this has been linked with positive organisational outcomes (Harter *et al.* 2002; Salanova *et al.* 2005; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Additionally, inclusion may also play a role in employee perceptions of recognition. According to Wayne and colleagues (2002), recognition (in the form of normative feedback, expressions of appreciation and thanks) from high level management is often perceived as a reward, although recognition from lower level management will generally still be appreciated but to a lesser degree (Wayne *et al.* 2002), while one-to-one conversations between employee and line manager has been found to be as, if not more, effective than financial rewards (Dewhurst *et al.* 2009).

In their attempt to explore the complexity of reward and recognition based on British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) data, Green and Heywood (2008) report that employees who scored highest on overall job satisfaction were not in receipt of any kind of bonus/performance/profit related pay system. However, employees in receipt of profit share or bonus schemes returned the highest scores on satisfaction with pay, but satisfaction with job security was scored lowest by employees earning performance related pay. These authors also highlight a number of demographic differences between industries, vocations and job grades. They found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and performance related pay amongst manufacturing and construction employees, a finding which was not comparable for respondents in the service sector, although employees in both sectors reported higher satisfaction where performance pay schemes were in place. These authors caveat their findings by noting that individual factors may also be at play, in so far as employees self-select into the sectors they work in, hence people more motivated by pay rewards may be attracted to those industries that offer them. The author's further state that performance pay may not necessarily increase job satisfaction for all workers, a finding supported by Sliwka and Grund (2006) who suggest that individuals with higher risk tolerance tend to be more likely to choose vocations that rely more on extrinsic motivators such as performance related pay. A potential strength of Green and Heywood's (2008) study is that it represents one of the few in-depth explorations of correlates/predictors of job satisfaction and pay, that has been drawn from a large and diverse sample (N= ~11,800); the majority of studies having been based upon discrete samples within a single sector, or a small sample of work organisations (see for example: Blegen, 1993; De Cuyper and de Witte, 2006; Galinsky *et al.* 2010). Despite extensive complementary evidence, publicised findings that directly address the impact of pay on QoWL remain scant, but appear to indicate that the picture is far from linear, with other aspects of QoWL intricately tied in with employee perceptions of reward and its impact on job satisfaction.

Issues of reciprocity are central to employee perceptions of reward and recognition for effort. If the employee perceives they are putting in (effort) more than they are getting out (reward) then an imbalance occurs. Siegrist *et al.'s* (1986; 1996; 2002) Effort-Reward Imbalance Model suggests that this reciprocity functions in relation to both extrinsic and intrinsic reward and that imbalance can become a source of tension and stress. There are essentially three propositions inherent in the Effort-Reward Imbalance Model: (i) poor health outcomes are increased by situations where high effort is met with low reward (extrinsic aspect); (ii) poor health outcomes are increased by over commitment (intrinsic aspect); (iii) poor health outcomes are most likely to occur where high effort/low reward and over commitment coexist. While initial investigation of these hypothesised relationships related predominately to cardiovascular outcomes of

imbalance, later studies have reported links to psychological outcomes (Appels *et al.* 1997). Although, the extrinsic aspect of the model has been widely supported, results in relation to over commitment has proven less conclusive and the combined effects have been the subject of little examination (see van Vegchel *et al.* 2005). However, it seems clear that the presence of high effort/low reward situations do result in stress, further strengthening the case for reward and recognition as countermeasures in the workplace.

There are compelling arguments both for and against financial reward, while non-financial reward and recognition appear broadly beneficial (see, for example, Dewhurst *et al.* 2009; O'Driscoll and Randall, 1999; Wayne *et al.* 2002). Furthermore, the landscape is far from level in that some jobs place a primary emphasis on payment by results (for example, sales and recruitment consultancy), with base wages, whereas others offer relatively low value financial rewards as a supplement to salary, that are arguably more appropriately cast as tokens of recognition, rather than being intrinsically motivating in themselves (for example, public sector performance pay schemes) (Burgess and Ratto, 2003). Although anecdotal evidence (on the basis of the researcher's past experience) would indicate that such job roles do also use recognition in the form of management and public praise for high performers, it is apparent that aspects of financial and non-financial rewards, industry/occupation and individual drivers are intricately intertwined, indicating that reward systems need to be tailored to reflect these differences. What does seem clear is that there is no strong evidence of a universal effect of financial reward in relation to QoWL and, on balance, it would appear that a combination of both financial rewards alongside non-financial rewards in the form of recognition, feedback and enhanced leader/subordinate communication might be the most beneficial in terms of organisational outcomes, employee satisfaction and, ultimately employee QoWL.

2.1.2 Peer Relationships

Peer Relationships relates to the quality of the relationships that employees form at work in terms of their reciprocal interactions with colleagues and team mates. It encompasses the supportive, collaborative or combative nature of these relationships and their impact on employee perceptions of QoWL.

Insights from studies of traditional Fordist arrangements arguably represent the first formal recognition of the linkage between peer relationships and employee QoWL (Mayo, 1933), but were largely ignored by early management theorists, such as Weber (1946) and Fayol (1949). In unintentionally highlighting the importance of taking account of employee perspectives on the configuration of work, the associated social relations and their impact on production [and by

implication, elements that relate to QoWL i.e. elements that were essentially underplayed by engineering orientated perspectives (see Wood and Wall, 2007)], Mayo's Hawthorne studies essentially gave academic credence to what most employees already knew, i.e. employees value positive interaction with their peers and this represents an important influence on their performance (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939), but provided much of the fillip for the 'new' management theories of the 1950's and 1960's, advanced by such influential authors as Maslow (1954) and McGregor (1960) that placed human relations at the centre of organisational processes.

The critiques of Fordist arrangements essentially shared the central premise that, while technology in the workplace was being developed and used to give greater control over production speed and processes, employees were suffering the consequences of this loss of task variety, opportunity for social interaction and control over the pace and configuration of work; such that workers were at risk of becoming alienated from their work. Although borrowed from Marx (1844), and used with reference to the development of the industrialisation, the term 'alienation' is used in a narrower sense here, Blauner (1964) characterising it with reference to the Powerlessness, resulting from a lack of control; Meaninglessness, where employees lack a sense of purpose in their job; Isolation, resulting from lack of opportunity to relate to others at work; and Self–Estrangement, whereby personal fulfilment in one's work is lacking. Turning to the role of peer relationships highlighted in the Hawthorne studies (1924-1932), more recent empirical work has revealed linkages with employee satisfaction (Morrison, 2004; Wagner and Harter, 2006) and performance (Gladstein, 1984; Goodman *et al.* 1988; Hackman, 1987) absenteeism (Wagner and Harter, 2006), intention to quit and labour turnover (Morrison, 2004; Mossholder *et al.* 2005). This has led to the conclusion, characterised by Gratton, that as human beings, we "are intensely affected by the state of our relationships with others" (Gratton, 2011; p.82), with relationships with co-workers being a key aspect of working life.

Interest in impacts arising from the quality of employee relations has sparked notable interest in self-managed teams and autonomous work groups, with the claimed benefits being said to relate to enhanced ownership, higher goal achievement orientation (see Hackman, 1987; Pearce and Ravlin, 1987; Porter *et al.* 1987) and increased job involvement (Morrison, 2004; Nugent and Abolafia, 2006). Task significance, variety and identity are also thought to be enhanced as group members have the opportunity to share out less interesting/rewarding tasks, vary the day-to-day tasks they undertake and develop a greater sense of their contribution to the whole (Hackman, 1987), further highlighting the fact that a one dimensional approach to retaining employees is inadequate.

Interdependence has been described as "a defining characteristic of groups… [and]…may increase the motivational properties of work or the efficiencies with which the work is done" (Campion et al, 1993; pp826-827). Interdependence has been linked to an enhanced sense of organisational commitment as a result of psychosocial support (Ensher *et al.* 2001) and responsibility of those within the group, but a clearly defined objective is key to group effectiveness (Hackman, 1987; Sundstrom *et al.* 1990). Social support as a result of peer relationships at work enhances trust, respect and cooperation, which can influence employee attitudes to work (Riordan, 1995). Cooperation at work and shared social activity have been implicated as ways in which dissatisfaction can be alleviated in the workplace, although whether the support has greater impact when from a supervisor, or when colleagues appear to depend upon occupational group (Henderson and Argyle, 1985). Group social support can serve to ease the boredom resulting from routine work (e.g. Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939; Bank wiring room observation study) and developing friendships at work can provide a needed comrade in difficult times.

Dedicated studies of the impact of peer group relationships expressly on QoWL remain limited, most studies tend to be limited to the narrow foci of impacts on job satisfaction and employee performance. However, it is possible to infer strong intuitive linkages to QOWL from these findings.

Heterogeneity of skills and ability have been found to have a positive impact on group performance and may improve satisfaction and communication (Pearce and Ravlin, 1987). However, the effect is not fully understood on account of the fact that it is primarily performance that is measured and not creativity and problem solving capability (Campion *et al.* 1993). Campion *et al.* (1993) note that in order to be effective, work groups also need adequate training, managerial support and communication and cooperation between groups to ensure that group boundaries are clear. Having said that however, the method applied to this research appears robust, involving the use of qualitative method to assess the conceptual framework in the first instance, followed by quantitative evaluation using a 5-point Likert-style scale, to which factor analysis was applied, although the sample used was limited to employees of a financial services company. Raising further questions of generalisability, the sample was also restricted to those engaged in clerical work within the organisation, whilst almost all respondents were female, with more than 50% being aged 30 years or younger.

However, peer relationships have the potential to influence employee experiences of work, and ultimately their QoWL negatively, as well as positively. Team dysfunction has been shown to have far reaching negative effects, including; lower productivity and effectiveness (Hackman

and Morris, 1975; Wall and Callister, 1995); lack of cooperation between team members, manifesting itself as a very individualistic approach to carrying out tasks; workflow disruption; and, significantly increased stress levels of the supervisor responsible for the under-performing team. Whilst task conflict has been shown to increase innovation (Tjosvold, 1997; cited in De Dreu and van Vianen, 2001), relationship conflict within teams can result in negative impacts on well-being and team effectiveness (De Dreu and Van de Vliert, 1997; Jehn, 1995). This relationship conflict also has the potential to threaten individuals' sense of self-worth (Pelled, 1995). The negative impacts do not end there it would appear, with team members becoming resentful of each other, resulting in social isolation (Weyman and Boocock, 2014) and withdrawal or absenteeism (Mathieu and Kohler, 1990). Furthermore, the impact of dysfunctional teams can become self-perpetuating. As discord grows, turnover increases and new recruits are slow to learn, further impacting on productivity. The lack of group cohesion also reduces support to new recruits, further slowing their ability to learn the job (Weyman and Boocock, 2014). Research by Medina *et al.* (2005) also found associations (but not causality) between relationship conflict and decreased employee satisfaction and psychological well-being and increased intention to quit. Although this research was limited to service industry employees, respondents did come from a range of functions including administration, customer facing and maintenance staff.

The conflicting findings pertaining to peer relationships are perhaps unsurprising when considered in light of the varied range of workplace relationships between colleagues, whereby being in a work group with others does not necessarily guarantee the development of an effective supportive relationship (Henderson and Argyle, 1985). Research (e.g. House, 1981) does suggest that a single source of social support in the immediate work group is often all that is required for positive benefits and psychosocial perspectives highlight the importance of social, cultural, psychological and environmental factors in promoting/enhancing well-being through work (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Although conflicting, the balance of evidence in relation to peer relationships at work demonstrates the many and varied benefits of fostering positive peer relationships. Benefits for the employer include increased productivity, effectiveness, lower sickness absence and turnover, whilst employees potentially gain from enhanced camaraderie, support and enhanced job satisfaction, all of which will likely enhance employee well-being and QoWL. Therefore, it would appear that overall the benefits of peer relationships outweigh the disbenefits, if it is assumed that peer conflict is likely to be the exception, rather than the norm of workplace interactions.

2.1.3 Career Progression, Development and Training

Career progression relates to the opportunities open to employees to enhance their career/employability within their organisation, rather than having to seek opportunities elsewhere. Development and training activities are related to career progression in that they offer the employee opportunity to enhance and consolidate their skills and competence and ready them for the next stage of their working life; in instances where they have a desire to progress their career. Both aspects of QoWL represent the organisation investing in its employees and demonstrate its value of them, as well as serving as a reward to employees on their performance.

Dedicated research exploring the impact of career progression opportunities on QoWL is limited, with most career related research focussing on career stages (e.g. Morrow and McElroy, 1987; Ornstein and Isabella, 1990) or career orientation and development (e.g. Crites, 1976; Linn, 1981; Super, 1957). Unsurprisingly, a widely reported finding is that restricted career progression opportunities are detrimental to job satisfaction (see, for example, Rice *et al.* 1989; Aitken *et al.* 2001; Price, 2002; Tzeng, 2002b) a premise supported by Siegrist's (2002) Effort-Reward Imbalance Model that cites personal development and promotion opportunity as important factors in self-regulation, with imbalance resulting in negative emotion. Research by Morrow and McElroy (1987) suggests that satisfaction with promotional opportunities declines with age and with length of tenure within an organisation, a finding that will likely gain increasing salience with recent changes in UK retirement age (see Weyman *et al.* 2012 for full discussion of issues and implications).

As Igbaria and Greenhaus note "prospects for advancement in rank and responsibility are generally considered a powerful source of motivation and satisfaction for most managerial and professional employees" (Igbaria and Greenhaus 1992; p478). This is complemented by evidence that career stagnation (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 2007) and a lack of promotion opportunities tend to sponsor dissatisfaction (Compton, 1987; Woodruff, 1980). Career satisfaction is also said to be positively related to organisational commitment (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 2007). Promotion opportunities also represent a form of reward, through the recognition of the employees' work to date and can also enhance job satisfaction by offering greater challenge and the enrichment of expertise, whilst increasing the employees' social status within the organisation (Robbins, 2001).

Much of the available evidence in this area tends to be profession or sector specific (e.g. Igbaria and Greenhaus, 2007) and, as a result, questions may be raised regarding its generalisability.

Indications appear to be that career progression opportunities do impact upon QoWL related factors, but more research needs to be done to better understand the relationships and strength of impact both career progression satisfaction *and* dissatisfaction have on QoWL.

Access to training and development opportunities have been associated with job satisfaction (Owens, 2006; Siebern-Thomas, 2005), as has mis-match between job role and skill set (Allen and van der Velden, 2001) and performance (Howell and Merenda-hall, 1999; Lockwood, 2007; Wayne *et al.* 2002) and intention to leave an organisation (Owens, 2006; Pugh, 1984; Thomas *et al.* 2000). However, evidence relating to the impact of access to training make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions. Sample sizes tend to be (e.g. see Owen, 2006) limited to single organisations. In a more comprehensive exploration of training provision and quality, Felstead *et al.* report findings from the 2012 *Skills and Employment Survey* (Felstead *et al.* 2012) from which they note that those educated to degree level and above receive double the number of training hours of non-graduate employees. Using data gathered through the UK Skills and Employment Survey (2012), comprised of 3,200 respondents, the survey explored number of hours' training undertaken, as well as the quality of the training attended on the basis of aspects such as certification and perceptions of whether skills had improved following the training, alongside satisfaction with the training. In addition, access to training appears to decline with age, according to some studies, with employees holding the perception that, as they age, their employer is less and less willing to invest in training (Weyman *et al.* 2013). There is also evidence that the skills older employees have developed in the course of their careers are often not fully utilised in later working life (Atkinson, 2003; cited in Weyman *et al.* 2013).

Whilst there is a notable dearth of dedicated empirical work that directly addresses the impact of career progression, training and development, associations between these workplace rewards and job satisfaction, performance and intention to quit do highlight their potential impact on QoWL there are strong intuitive linkages.

2.1.4 Autonomy

Autonomy is defined in terms of the degree to which individuals have control over how they organise their work and their working day and is also dependent upon how much choice is afforded in relation to time and workload management. Associated with the degree of independence and control an employee has over how they organise their time and workload, autonomy has been associated with employee engagement and trust (Cathcart *et al.* 2004), as well as directly to job satisfaction (Finn, 2001; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2004; Spector, 1986).

Studies of autonomy have been prevalent with the nursing profession, with research indicating that autonomy is positively correlated to job satisfaction (Gellis *et al.* 2004; Ingersoll *et al.* 2002; Kramer and Schmalenberg, 2003; Westlund and Hannon, 2008); with low autonomy and its negative impact on job satisfaction resulting in higher rates of turnover amongst nurses (Larrabee *et al.* 2003) and higher rates of conflict between work and family (Thomas and Ganser, 1995). Using a mixed methods approach comprising of a paired comparison exercise and Likert scale questionnaire developed specifically for nurses (based on that developed by Stamps and Piedmonte, 1986; cited in Finn, 2000), Finn found autonomy to be the most important factor in job satisfaction for nurses at a Brisbane teaching hospital. While the method reported appears robust, the generalisability of results is limited on account of the fact that the assessment measure was developed for and applied to nursing staff only. Such limitations to the scope of research appear to be a theme in relation to the exploration of autonomy, with studies focussing on specific industries/sectors (e.g. Finn, 2000; Ingersoll *et al.* 2002; Kramer and Schmalenberg, 2003). Granting employees greater autonomy over how they carry out their daily duties has been said to enhance QoWL (Walton, 1974). However, on a cautionary note, this increased autonomy is dependent upon the organisation/supervisor sufficiently trusting the employee to appropriately manage their workload, and this relates back, not only to organisational culture and mutual trust, but also to how good the organisation's recruitment process is in selecting the most competent candidate for the job in the first instance (Walton, 1974).

Autonomy over hours of work has been shown to reduce conflict between work and family in telecommunications employees (Goldstein, 2003), and to enhance organisational commitment (Hill *et al.* 1998). Although findings are mixed, with more recent studies finding support for an association with organisational commitment but no such association between work and family conflict (Ahuja *et al.* 2007).

The perception and reactions to a given work environment that an individual develops has been related to the degree to which that individual feels they can exert control over that environment, even if their belief in that control is misplaced (Spector, 1986). Hackman and Oldham (1976) include autonomy in their five dimensions comprising the *Job Characteristics Model*, believing it to be of key importance in determining employee satisfaction. Participative management is one method through which employee perceptions of control can be shaped, and has been shown by some to positively influence productivity and employee attitudes (Coch and French, 1948), although these findings have not always been replicated (Lischeron and Wall, 1975; see section 2.1.6, Employee Engagement). The key to enhancing employee perceptions of autonomy, according to Spector (1986), lies in the sense of personal control an employee gains from

organisational efforts and research does broadly indicate that this has a positive impact on employee satisfaction (Srivastava, 1983). However, increased autonomy may only be an effective tool in enhancing employee satisfaction, where that employee desires growth (Hackman and Oldham, 1976) and has been found to be detrimental in some low-skilled jobs (Gagne and Deci, 2005).

Lack of autonomy has been indicated as being particularly problematic when combined with high work intensity with associations to negative health outcomes (see for example Siegrist, 2006), while increased autonomy has been associated with stress reduction (Kalleberg *et al.* 2009). Research based on the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) (Lopes *et al.* 2014) offers a comprehensive exploration of the impact of autonomy and work pressure on job satisfaction over a period of fifteen years, based on a sample of approximately 1000 face-to-face interviews. Using regression models to examine the association between autonomy, work pressure and job satisfaction, the authors took a sequential approach to the analysis introducing first the control variables, then the autonomy variables and finally, work pressure. Interactions between autonomy and work pressure were also considered. These authors report that increased autonomy influences job satisfaction and work pressure has a negative impact on job satisfaction. Reinforcing findings reported elsewhere, Van der Doef and Maes (2010) found that increased work pressure has a lower impact on job satisfaction when autonomy is high. Acknowledging the potential limitations of self-report job satisfaction measures and the affective nature of job satisfaction, Lopes et al. (2014) also explored work-induced ill-health related to job strain (anxiety, heart disease, disrupted sleep, fatigue, muscle pain) in relation to work pressure and autonomy. While these authors were unable to establish any causal relationships, their work does present an in-depth examination of the impact of work pressure and autonomy on job satisfaction and highlights a number of potential limitations of self-report job satisfaction.

Although enhanced autonomy has generally been shown to produce an array of positive outcomes, a number of authors also point to inconsistent effects (Goodman *et al.* 1998; Guzzo and Dickson, 1996), notably in the area of team performance with positive effects being dependent upon task uncertainty (Stewart, 2006; Wall *et al.* 2002). Interestingly, autonomous teams have also been shown to perform at their best in uncertain circumstances – either during times of change, or in the face of unreliable technology. It has been suggested that during times of high uncertainty, procedures cannot necessarily be applied as standard, that supervisors are best advised to delegate decision making to their team, as they are unable to oversee all of the uncertainty (Wall and Jackson, 1995; Wall *et al.* 1990). Autonomous work groups might appear attractive to organisations with regards reduction of costs as they require less supervision (Batt,

2001), but there is evidence to suggest that team performance might be reduced. Findings indicate that where individual autonomy within the team is high, and trust between team members is also high, monitoring between team members is likely to be low. Questioning of team members then becomes unacceptable within the group as it represents low trust in colleagues (Langfred, 2004). The outcome of such a circumstance has been shown to result in poor team performance (Langfred, 2004). However, comparison of autonomous versus non-autonomous teams by DeVaro (2006) showed no difference in performance outcomes, which might be related to findings that the benefits of autonomous teams are not necessarily evident where task interdependence is not present (Sprigg *et al.* 2000). Thus, indicating that the benefits are seen only where the team have to work together interdependently to a common goal. Team cohesiveness is also a factor in ensuring high performing autonomous work groups, where conflict amongst team mates translates to poorer performance (Banker *et al.* 1996).

Increased employee autonomy would appear to have the potential to enhance QoWL in the most part, but should be carefully implemented and supported such that the potential negative outcomes can be managed. Ensuring that this autonomy is supported by open communication, such that employees still feel supported whilst exercising their autonomy, and can openly discuss concerns in teamwork environments might prove to be the mediating factor in counterbalancing any potential disbenefits.

2.1.5 Working Conditions

Working conditions relate to the extrinsic work environment in which employees operate and include; harm, hazard, uncertainty, no voice, neglect, atmosphere, conflicts, heavy workload - physically and mentally (Bockerman and Ilmakunnas, 2008).

Bockerman and Ilmakunnas assert that "adverse working conditions stimulate job dissatisfaction" (2008; p.521) a theory espoused as far back as 1959 by Hertzberg *et al.* (1959) in their 'Dual-Factor Theory', which proposed that job satisfaction is primarily drawn from intrinsic factors, whereas job dissatisfaction comes from the absence or insufficiency of extrinsic factors, such as working conditions and pay (also see Bockerman and Ilmakunnas, 2008). There have been numerous critiques of Dual-Factor theory, dating back to soon after its publication as a theory. Vroom (1964), for example, suggests that people will be inclined to attribute good outcomes to their own performance and bad to that of the environment and others. As commented above, a notable feature of Hertzberg's (1959) model that is not widely encountered is the inclusion of variables with the potential to erode/degrade QoWL, as well as those that might plausibly enhance it.

Poor physical working conditions have also been associated with significantly higher rates of depressive symptoms in employees (Burgard *et al.* 2013), burnout (Umene-Nakano *et al.* 2013) and increased sickness absence (Dionne and Dostie, 2007), especially where wages are not considered sufficiently compensatory for the adverse working conditions (Bockerman and Ilmakunnas, 2006; 2008). "Adverse" conditions, according to Bokerman and Ilmakunnas (2008) include: harm; hazard; uncertainty; having no voice; neglect; atmosphere; conflicts; and a heavy workload, both physically and mentally. The majority of published findings focus on traditional health and safety effects (i.e. noise, thermal stress etc. see Hockey and Hamilton, 1983; Holding, 1983; Hockey, 1997) and its effect on error rates (see Reason, 1990) and performance, rather than on QoWL related outcomes, although higher rates of job satisfaction have been associated with more positive perceptions of safety climate (Ayim Gyekye, 2005). Health and safety related approaches advocate involving employees in identifying risks in the work environment and engaging them in finding possible solutions (e.g. Marsh, 2013), an approach which could also be applied to the working environment physically and in relation to psychosocial risk/dissatisfaction through employee engagement and involvement.

By contrast, the research undertaken by Bockerman and Ilmakunnas (2008) based on data collected in the Quality of Work Life Survey (QWLS, 1997) takes a representative sample of employees across a range of industries and explores the interaction of working conditions, job satisfaction and sickness absence. The research boasts a large sample size (N=2800), but is limited to employees in Finland only, a country which tends to have a high rate of sickness absence and a system which results in wage compression. The authors suggest that this prevents higher wages being paid in jobs where working conditions might be considered adverse. If 'Dual Factor Theory' does in fact hold true, this would lead to reduced job satisfaction and poor perceptions of QoWL. They also report that adverse working conditions are a predictor of increased sickness absence and are associated with job dissatisfaction (Bockerman and Ilmakunnas, 2008).

2.1.6 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is defined as the extent to which employees feel listened to and involved in decision making within their work organisation. Employee engagement has been described as "a critical driver of business success" (Lockwood, 2007; p.2) and has been the subject of enquiry in relation to how engagement might impact on various aspects of business performance. Employee engagement has been associated with improved organisational performance (Laschinger and Finegan, 2005; Laschinger and Leiter, 2006; Salanova *et al.*

2005), and participation in managerial and operational problem solving/decision making has been emphasized by a number of authors, with many claiming its importance in achieving positive outcomes for the organisation (e.g. Bates, 2004; Harter *et al.* 2002), including customer loyalty (Salanova *et al.* (2005), customer satisfaction (Harter *et al.* 2002) and in relation to product quality (Katz *et al.* 1985). However, whilst they predominate, such findings are not universal; for example, Katz *et al.* (1985) found no correlation between involvement and organisational effectiveness.

In terms of potential benefits to employees, engagement in decision making has been advocated by researchers as an effective means of reducing sickness absence, accidents, grievances and intention to quit (Havlovic, 1991; Koyuneu *et al.* 2006), increasing Perceived Organisational Support (POS)[1], reducing burnout (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004) and enhancing job involvement (Siegel and Ruh, 1973) and job satisfaction (Koyuneu *et al.* 2006). Igbaria *et al.* (1994) looked at job involvement and QoWL in information systems personnel, finding that job involvement and QoWL have a complex relationship. Linked to this is Karasek's influential Job-Demands-Control Model (Karasek, 1979), which posits that employee perceptions of personal control, alongside their ability to manage work/task demand is central in stress management. Engagement in decision making represents one facet of enhancing employee sense of control over their work environment and such engagement will also likely enhance employee control over balancing the demands of their job by engaging them in shaping how they manage their workload.

Whilst employee involvement does appear to yield positive benefits for employees (Havlovic *et al.* 1991; Koyuneu *et al.* 2006; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), this is countered by suggestions that too much can increase job demands, to the point of operating as a source of job stress (e.g. Karasek, 1979). However, lack of employee engagement has also been associated with increased stress, as well as higher rates of sickness absence and intention to quit (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Research by Martel (2003) for the Gallup Organisation found that 62% of employees who rated themselves as being engaged at work, also reported that work had a positive impact on their physical health, while 54% of employees who reported being disengaged at work also expressed the view that their work had a negative effect on their health, indicating that employees certainly do perceive engagement as an important aspect of their QoWL and well-being. Furthermore, good employee engagement relies upon leaders who are equipped with the skills and confidence to facilitate this engagement, meaning that organisations must be

1 Perceived Organisational Support (POS) – the degree to which an employee feels they have the support of their organisation (Wayne *et al.* 2002).

particularly fastidious in their selection of employees recruited for supervisory roles (Martel, 2003).

On the basis of the research referenced above, the general consensus is that engaging employees is positive for both the organisation and the employee, and while the performance benefits for the organisation may not be completely clear, it would seem that engaged employees are likely to experience better QoWL. Perhaps the challenge lies then in finding leaders who are adept at developing and nurturing employee engagement.

2.1.7 Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is defined as the relationship between leader and subordinate. The quality of this two-way, "dyadic" (Graen *et al.* 1977) relationship will determine the degree of autonomy, influence and control an employee has, with those in the supervisor's 'in-group' enjoying more of these 'perks' than those in the 'out-group' (Dansereau *et al.* 1975). At one extreme, the supervisor might rely solely on the formal contract between organisation and employee and "fulfil the employment contract without entering into any but the most minimal social exchange…he has the means to treat the member much as he would a part in a complex machine" (Dansereau *et al.* 1975; p.49). At the other extreme the supervisor might rely on informal supervision techniques, which can result in more valuable outcomes for both parties, including more open and honest communication, greater decision making control and higher consideration for the employee. In return the employee might offer greater discretionary effort, take more responsibility and show higher commitment in the success of the department/organisation as a whole (Dansereau *et al.* 1975; Dansereau *et al.* 1982). It could be suggested that the bureaucratisation associated with the increasingly complex organisational structures, involving more 'layers' of management and the need for teams to work interdependently, this need for positive Leader-Member Exchange is more salient than ever in promoting and maintaining good QoWL.

A number of authors cite the degree of affective commitment by an employee to their line-manager as a significant predictor of turnover intention (Graen *et al.* 1982; Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009; Vecchio, 1982; 1985). Furthermore, it has been suggested that affective commitment to the employing organisation and affective commitment to the line-manager (and related 'local' function) can exhibit discrete profiles, i.e. high commitment to one does not necessarily generalise to the other.

Many authors cast the quality of the relationship between the employee and their supervisor/line manager as a stronger predictor of outcome variables, such as intention to quit (Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009) empowerment (Ayree and Chen, 2006; Bitmis and Ergeneli, 2011; Liden *et al.* 2000; Wat and Shaffer, 2005) and job satisfaction (Bitmis and Ergeneli, 2011; Epitropaki and Martin, 2005; Gerstner and Day, 1997; Ilies *et al.* 2007).

Developing effective LMX is potentially beneficial to both leaders and subordinates (Jackson and Johnson, 2012). The likelihood of effective LMX occurring has been associated with higher subordinate extroversion, combined with more approachable leaders (Nahrgang *et al.* 2009), as well as with similarity in terms of the degree of extroversion between leader and subordinate (Phillips and Bedeian, 1994).

Whilst the evidence around Leader-Member Exchange relates primarily to communication, it should be noted that what might be considered to constitute communication extends beyond the content of what is said in day-to-day exchanges and what is written into company policy/procedure. It includes other more subtle (and by extension, more difficult to measure), that includes what goes unsaid/unarticulated, and the manner and context in which messages emerge. Much of this tends to give rise to rather vague and impressionistic perceptions amongst employees, with linkages to what has been characterised in other communication domains as corporate body language (see Pidgeon *et al.* 2003), i.e. corporate actions that sponsor "perceived openness; competence; objectivity; fairness; consistency; independence and altruism" (Pidgeon *et al.* 2003; p.2).

Research by PriceWaterhouseCooper for the Black review (2008), stresses the need for management commitment and visible leadership practices that support well-being, as well as employee engagement. Supportive of this premise is research that suggests that leadership style may also impact QoWL through the application of a participative management style, whereby employees are empowered by their management to actively participate in the process of decision-making, has been shown to have a positive impact on employee mental health, work-related stress (Bliese and Castro, 2000; Schirmer and Lopez, 2001) and job satisfaction (Fisher, 1989, cited in Kim, 2002; Gerstner and Day, 1997; Green *et al.* 1996; Graen *et al.* 1982; Spector, 1986; Vecchio, 1982; 1985), although a minority contest that the evidence is inconsistent (e.g. Daniels and Bailey, 1999). However, the balance of published findings appears to indicate that participative management has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction (Berstein, 1993; Kim, 2002; Likert, 1967). Furthermore, there are claims that leaders who provide challenging work, encourage co-operation with co-workers and foster relationships of trust with their employees tend to develop higher levels of Leader-Member

Exchange, resulting in increased employee commitment and more positive attitudes to work (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden *et al.*1993), and those more charismatic leaders who engage a transformational leadership approach also tend to see higher engagement and inspiration from their employees (Northouse, 2001) and higher job performance ratings (Borman *et al.* 1995; Dansereau *et al.* 1982; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden *et al.* 1993; Markham *et al.* 2010). Good Leader-Member Exchange has even been associated with greater innovation (Basu and Green, 1997; Scott and Bruce, 1994).

Ultimately, leaders have the power to influence the environment in which their team operate (Bitmis and Ergeneli, 2011), both physically and psychosocially, through their decisions about workload, resource allocation and their expectations about what reasonably can be done in the given timeframes. In light of the research, effective Leader-Member Exchange, characterised by high quality communication and cooperation between leader and member, will ensure that leaders have accurate information upon which to make strategic and resourcing decisions that will facilitate the organisation in reaching its objectives and support good QoWL for employees.

2.1.8 Work-Life Balance

Work-Life Balance is defined as the balance an individual experiences between the demands of work and home life, most particularly in relation to having sufficient time to engage in a fulfilling home life without the interruptions and worries of work interfering (Manfredi and Holliday, 2004). The concept embodies both objective and subjective elements, in so far as it relates to working hours and job demands, but also, critically, to employees subjective assessment of this in relating to non-work commitments and priorities (Lahelma *et al.* 2002; Weyman *et al.* 2013; Lyon and Woodward, 2000).

Work-Life Balance (WLB) is a concept "based on the notion that paid work and personal life should be seen less as competing priorities than as complementary elements of a full life" (Manfredi and Holliday, 2004; p.5). While work-life balance is likely of salience to all employees, the evidence highlights notable variability between individuals and a range of demographic differences in perspective on this issue (Sperlich *et al.* 2012; Staland-Nyman *et al.* 2008; Lyon and Woodward, 2000). Notably, there is widespread evidence of age/life course differences (see, Weyman *et al.* 2013). The reasons cited for these differences is varied, with people at different ages tending to have different drivers for the work-life balance they strive to achieve; "young people possibly to travel, those with children to balance work and family, and older age groups who may have caring responsibilities, or who are willing to trade income for leisure time" (Weyman *et al.* 2013; p.57). Findings remain mixed in relation to age and work-

life balance as some argue that younger employees, with family, will seek more balance to manage home life (e.g. Lyon and Woodward, 2000), and others suggest that gaining better balance increases in salience with age as employees become increasingly responsible for the care of elderly relatives, grandchildren and their own health needs (Weyman *et al.* 2013). Impacts on women have arguably received disproportionate emphasis, a large number of studies having focused on rising rates of female employment and tensions between balancing the demands of work and traditional conceptions of the housewife -mother role, and women as primary carers (e.g. Lahelma *et al.* 2002; Matthews *et al.* 2006; McMunn *et al.* 2006; Sperlich *et al.* 2012; Staland-Nyman *et al.* 2008).

A dominant and comparatively recent theme amongst contemporary perspectives on work-life balance relates to the impact of mobile technology and remote access and the potential for this to blur historical boundaries between work and home life (e.g. Hill *et al.* 2001; Shamir and Soloman, 1985), superficially an overflow of work into would traditionally have been work time. Most studies focus on what are cast as actual and potential detrimental effects; a relatively smaller number of studies reporting gains in autonomy and control. For example, Crouter *et al.* (1989) and Matthews *et al.* (2006) report negative impacts on marital relationships, similarly, Padon and Buehler, (1995) and Repetti and Wood (1997) found that poor work-life balance can result in the withdrawal of one parent from family life as a result of an excessive spillover from work to the home. Mobile technology has been credited with alleviating some of this spillover, by enabling employees to work remotely, or from home, reducing travel time and time away from the family home stationed in an office environment (Baruch, 2000; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Hill *et al.* 1998). However, the picture is not straight forward, with some research suggesting that mobile technology increases home-work conflict by blurring the line between the home and the work place (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Olson and Primps, 1984; Shamir and Salomon, 1985) and in undermining QoWL due to the reduced opportunities for team working and social interaction and camaraderie employees might experience as a result of working remotely on a regular basis (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). Employees who regularly work remotely have also been found to suffer higher rates of mental ill-health than those who are based in their place of work (Mann and Holdsworth, 2003). However, as on other aspects reviewed, the focus of studies has tended to be limited to singular organisations (e.g. see Hill *et al.* 2001) or a small sample of organisations with only a few respondents within the organisations studied (e.g. Baruch 2000). Thus, the mixed picture presented in relation to the relative benefits/disbenefits of mobile technology on work-life balance might relate to different organisations/industries, and a more holistic enquiry would potentially extrapolate some of these complexities, offering a much clearer perspective.

Issues relating to work-life balance are not limited to purely time and locality. The impact of perceived pressure to work long hours and inability to 'switch off' from work has been somewhat neglected in the literature. Although the introduction and increased usage of mobile technology has been implicated as having a negative effect on social integration in the workplace as a result of employees spending less time in the same locale, and in blurring the lines between work and home (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). However, the introduction of work-life balance policies within organisations has been linked to reduced turnover (Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Eaton, 2001; Evans, 2001; Pohlen Kean, 2002) and reduced re-recruitment costs (Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Evans, 2001) reduced absenteeism (Comfort *et al*. 2003; Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998), higher productivity (Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Eaton, 2001; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998), reduced stress levels (Evans, 2001) and improved morale (Comfort *et al.* 2003; Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998). Whether these improvements are the result of *actual* changes to the work environment following the application of such processes, or whether it is simply that employees feel that such policies represent a demonstration by the company of care and concern for their well-being, it is not possible to determine. Furthermore, the nature of work appears to influence the likelihood of the availability of work-life balance policies with generally less prevalence of such policies in low skilled and hourly paid work (Galinsky and Bond, 1998) and greater prevalence of work-life balance related policies in organisations employing a greater proportion of women (Konrad and Mangal, 2000).

There are also costs associated with offering greater employee work-life balance, including: parental leave costs; back filling temporary absences; reduced productivity as a result of disruption; and, in the case of those employees who feel they are not benefitting, reduced morale (Dex and Scheibl, 1999). In challenging economic times these associated costs may become more subject to question, such that positive work-life balance policies are reduced or eroded.

There is strong consensus within the literature that enhancing work-life balance is a positive in relation to employee QoWL. What is in debate however, is where the work-life balance *lines* are drawn, particularly in relation to the rise of mobile technology. While some suggest mobile technology has a positive impact on QoWL, others refute this suggesting that it provides a means by which work can permeate home life even further, preventing employees from ever truly leaving the office and 'switching off' at the end of the day. It seems however, that it is not the technology that is at fault but the expectations of those who make it available to employees, alongside the patterns of usage that employees adopt. In today's non-stop, fast-paced economy, it seems as though we are expected to respond to emails and messages immediately regardless

of time of day, day of the week, or whether or not one is attempting to enjoy some annual leave. Change the expectations and the mobile technology no longer has the power to infringe upon home life. Regardless of the causes, work-life balance is clearly an important aspect which must be addressed if employees are truly to experience healthy QoWL.

2.1.9 Working hours

Working hours is defined in relation to duration and length of working day, and configuration of work time, e.g. Flexi-time, compressed hours and the impact of shift work on QoWL. Working hours in the sense of length and configuration of the working day has transparent linkages with issues of work life balance, e.g. shift work can be disruptive to home life, family and social commitments, i.e. work-life balance is not just about hours of work and blurring of boundaries, but also the configuration of working hours.

As noted in the preceding section, the increasing use of mobile technology and the ability to utilise this to work from multiple sites has potentially created a more complex picture of working hours than might have been evident in past times, when the majority of work had to be done at the work site, meaning that the end of the working day was a clear point at which one left the office/factory etc.

'Flexi-time' is a term widely used to describe a range of arrangements whereby employees have a degree of autonomy over the configuration of their working hours in a given accounting period (Alis *et al.* 2006; Hill *et al.* 2001). Flexi-time arrangements tend to be more commonly encountered in white collar occupations, particularly within the public sector (e.g. the Whitehall Studies; Marmot, 1995; Marmot and Brunner, 2005; Marmot *et al.* 2001; North *et al.* 1993). Although the availability of flexible working hours in UK employment has increased in recent years (Kersley *et al.* 2006), but is still rarely found in blue collar occupations. This has been attributed to the higher level of interdependence associated with the productive process (Baltes *et al.*1999).

An arrangement more commonly encountered in traditional blue collar and, increasingly, non-public facing white collar occupations (Baltes *et al.* 1999), as well as within the State health sector (NHS) (*The Guardian*, Jan 9th; 2015) is 'compressed working hours', typically configured as 3 or more shifts of 10-12 hours. Flexible and compressed working hours have been shown to have a variety of benefits including greater employee job satisfaction (Baltes *et al.* 1999; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998; Golembiewski *et al.* 1974; Hyman and Summers, 2004; Orpen, 1981) and higher levels of initiative (Galinsky and Johnson, 1998) and autonomy taken

(Kelliher and Anderson, 2008); reduced absenteeism (Baltes *et al.* 1999), higher job satisfaction (Baltes *et al.* 1999) and increased productivity (Baltes *et al.* 1999; Eaton, 2003; Schein *et al.* 1977). Furthermore, Baltes *et al.* (1999) found flexible working hours to have a more significant positive effect on reducing absenteeism than productivity *per se*, while compressed working hours had no impact on either but did positively effect attitude to work. However, the picture is complex and evidence in relation to compressed working hours is conflicting with regards to any impact on physical and mental well-being (see for example, Poissonnet and Veron, 2000).

Whilst, intuitively, flexible working arrangements may have a positive with respect to an employee's experience of work, such arrangements have been found to have a negative impact on an organisation's ability to plan, supervisor ability to manage and co-ordinate their workforce and, can have negative impacts on customer/client relations (Baltes *et al.* 1999). The availability of flexible working arrangements have also been implicated as having causal impacts on employee retention and intention to quit, i.e. if working arrangements are of poor fit with employee needs and preferences (Branine, 2003; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998). Flexible working opportunities have also been associated with lower levels of marital conflict (Bolger *et al.* 1989; Bumpus *et al.* 1999; Crouter *et al.* 1989; Greenhaus and Powell, 2006) and enhanced well-being in the case of working parents, although some of the associations found here are reported to be weak (Shinn *et al.* 1989). Additionally, the impact of flexible working may not be wholly positive from the employee perspective, Kelliher and Anderson (2009) for example, found that work intensification increases in response to flexible working practices and longitudinal studies suggest that the positive impact of more flexible working patterns diminish over time as workers become used to them and their need satisfaction levels increase (Baltes *et al*. 1999).

Flexibility is not the only form of working hours that might impact upon QoWL. Shift work has been widely implicated as having negative effects on employee well-being (Sparks *et al.* 1997) on account of the disruption it can cause to "biological and social synchrony" (Costa and Di Milia, 2008; p.172). It has also been associated with intention to quit as a result of the impact of shift work on work-life balance (Carlson *et al.* 2009). Further research suggests that the shift work also contributes to the development of psychological and somatic disorders (Bohle and Tilley, 1998; Frone *et al.* 1993; Tiedje *et al.* 1990). Risk also appears to be increased as a result of shift work, particularly when considering long and successive night shifts (Tucker *et al*, 2003). In marked contrast to this biological evidence, the authors of *'Is Work Good for your Health and Well-Being?'* conclude that "within reason, shift patterns and hours of work probably do not have a major impact on health: what workers choose and are happy with is more important" (Waddell and Burton 2006, p.10), indicating that the degree of employee

autonomy and choice might be more salient than the actual hours/shifts worked. As on other issues there is little research that has expressly attempted to address the impact of shift work on QoWL, but that which does exist (e.g. Bohle and Tilley, 1998; Carlson *et al.* 2009; Frone *et al.* 1993; Tiedje *et al.* 1990; cited above) seems to offer intuitive associations.

While the case for excessive working hours to negatively impact on QoWL is strong, which can manifest into conflict between the work and non-work lives of employees, there are a sub-set of employees who choose to invest themselves more fully in their work and elect to work for long hours, just as there are those who elect to work shift patterns. However, a discriminator in this regard potentially relates to the degree of employee choice over the issue. Part of the responsibility here then rests with the employee in ensuring they understand the hours and degree of flexibility afforded to then when accepting a job and the choices they make having taken up the post. However, the organisation has a part to play here too, firstly in ensuring that employees are aware of expectations in relation to working hours at the point of job offer, and secondly, in seeking to offer what flexibility can reasonably be accommodated whilst still fulfilling organisational objectives.

2.1.10 Job Satisfaction

According to Locke (1969) job satisfaction is defined as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (p.316). More recently, Job Satisfaction has been defined as those factors that are "intrinsic to the work that employees confront such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, advancement, personal growth, enhanced competence, and meaning of the job" (Bitmis and Ergeneli, 2011; p. 1144) and has been the subject of a significant proportion of the research in relation to QoWL. Warr articulates the key and useful distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic components (Warr, 2002). This author casts intrinsic job satisfaction as relating to aspects of the job related to the degree of decision making/control an employee has, the challenge of the work and opportunity to use skills and position within the organisation. By contrast, extrinsic components are said to relate to those things the organisation offers in relation to pay, bonuses, annual leave entitlement, that are external to the employee and their direct experience of the work itself (see section 2.1.1).

The early work of Blauner (1960; cited in Watson, 1995) indicates four key aspects of work-related satisfaction – occupational prestige; control over working conditions; social satisfaction gained through work; sharing "non-work activities" (Watson, 1995; p.144) with colleagues - all

of which are intrinsic in nature, in that they relate to the work itself and not the extrinsic rewards which might be obtained through completion of the work. Blauner's (1960) satisfaction studies identified a hierarchy of satisfaction, with professionals and business persons reportedly most satisfied, followed by clerical workers then skilled manual workers, with unskilled manual and assembly line workers least satisfied. These findings have more recently been replicated by Lopes *et al.* (2014) in their examination of European Working Conditions Survey data. When considered in relation to the sorts of psychological contract employees make when entering work, essentially cast as a quasi-calculation of what they might gain from the employ, compared with what might be sacrificed, it is suggested that those more likely to achieve the highest intrinsic satisfaction, might also be in the position of achieving greatest extrinsic rewards, thus the two have been said to be inextricably linked (Watson, 1995).

As discussed above, developments in the organisation of work, notably the process of industrialisation has provided considerable insight into aspects of job satisfaction. According to Locke (1969) "Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives it as offering or entailing" (p.316). Locke (1969) presents the example of a man's satisfaction with the length of his working week, based on; (i) the number of hours the man thinks he has worked; (ii) the number of hours he ideally would have liked to have worked; and, (iii) the difference between these two - the greater the disparity, the greater the dissatisfaction.

Parker (1983; cited in Watson, 1995) suggests that satisfaction is the product of being able to; create something; use skill; work wholeheartedly; work with people who 'know their job'; whereas dissatisfaction is the product of: repetitive work; making only a small part of something; doing useless tasks; insecurity; supervision that is too close. For many commentators the classic Ford production model embodying a high division of labour and short job cycles as performed by unskilled workers, represented the zenith of alienating and intrinsically unsatisfying work, this sponsoring a number of dis-benefits; notably, high rates of labour turnover and high rates of collective action in pursuit of higher wages (Parker, 1983; cited in Watson, 1995; also see, for example, Beynon, *Working for Ford* (1973)). Beynon (1973) explored the impact of the high speed automation of the car manufacturing production line. The experience was 'bleak', as a journalist who went to work in the factory reports "at the end of the first fortnight, the sheer monotony of the work was turning me into a zombie. I stopped reading books, and slumped in front of the telly at night without selecting the programmes" (*The Times,* 3rd March 1972; cited in Beynon, 1973). High rates of labour

turnover occurred despite the high wages offered to labourers who otherwise, could not have earned so much working elsewhere.

As such, job satisfaction appears to function on two levels, on the one hand is the satisfaction gained through doing one's job, enjoying it and feeling that the job adds value. Whilst, job satisfaction is also intricately linked to the other aspects of QoWL discussed here and as such, there is general agreement that job satisfaction can be influenced by other aspects of QoWL that offer intrinsic reward, including (but not limited to); promotion opportunities (Aiken *et al.* 2001; Price, 2002; Tzeng, 2002b); training and development opportunities (Owens, 2006; Siebern-Thomas, 2005); autonomy (Finn, 2001; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2004); engagement (Koyuneu *et al.* 2006); leader-member exchange (Bitmis and Ergeneli, 2011; Epitropki and Martin, 2005; Ilies *et al.* 2007). All of these aspects of QoWL have the potential to increase employee competence and ownership and, as a result, enhance employee perceptions of the value their work adds to the wider organisational objectives, as well as enabling the employee to take pride in a job well done, all of which will likely enhance employee perceptions of satisfaction gained through doing their job.

2.2 Biopsychosocial Perspectives

Biopsychosocial perspectives relate to the interplay of biological, psychological and social factors on health and well-being. In recent years, biopsychosocial perspectives on the impact of work on well-being have emerged (Coggan, 2005; Dunstan and Covic, 2006; Lunt *et al.* 2007; Waddell and Burton, 2006), such approaches can be traced back to the interest in human relations which emerged from the impacts of applications of F.W Taylor's work and the Hawthorne Studies of the 1930s, (Mayo 1933). Biopsychosocial approaches are essentially an evolutionary boarding of the human relations perspective, that are widely held to represent a more multi-disciplinary and holistic approach to understanding the impact of work on employee health, safety and well-being (physical and psychological), [see for example, Faragher *et al.* (2005); Tsutsumi and Kawakami, (2004); Van der Doef and Maes, (1999)]. Biopsychosocial factors include a diverse range of work related factors including (but not limited to) musculoskeletal conditions; work related stress; shift patterns; work-family balance; burnout; physical injury caused by accidents at work and also health conditions such as cardiovascular disease; relationships with colleagues and supervisors/managers (Lunt *et al.* 2007). The influential 2006 review, '*Is Work Good for your Health and Well-Being?'* Commissioned by the UK Department for Work and Pensions, reported "an association between various psychosocial

characteristics of work (job satisfaction, job demands/control, effort/reward, social support) and various subjective measures of general health and psychological well-being" (Waddell and Burton, 2006; p.22; also see Black, 2008). The issue of mental ill health at work and the taboos that still surround talking about it openly, was recently brought to the fore by KPMG (http://www.kpmg.com/uk/en/issuesandinsights/articlespublications/newsreleases/pages/failure-to-tackle-depression-will-harm-uk-businesses-says-kpmg.aspx) Chief Operating Officer, Nick Barber (*The Times*, February 5, 2015) who spoke out about his own experiences and urged other senior managers to do the same in a bid to make talking about mental health more acceptable in the workplace, highlighting the difficulty in removing such taboos.

Siegrist (2002) highlights the role of biopsychosocial factors on well-being (specifically stress) in his Effort-Reward Imbalance Model. The Model indicates that where effort is perceived to be high and reward low, negative emotions result with significant risk of the development of stress and related ill-health (e.g. coronary heart disease) and depression. According to Siegrist, a lack of reciprocity in workplace exchanges can result in the deterioration of a person's sense of self-efficacy, self-esteem or sense of belonging. These aspects of the person contribute to the individual's ability to self-regulate, so deterioration in any of the three aspects can result in detrimental effects on the health and well-being of the individual. While the Siegrist Model makes specific reference to stress, which can be an outcome/indicator of poor QoWL, the means by which all three aspects of self-regulation can be satisfied do actually mirror a number of the aspects of QoWL discussed in the course of this literature review. For example, Self-efficacy can be gained through doing a good job (Job Satisfaction) and personal development (Training and Investment); Self-Esteem can be gained through reward, recognition and career progression opportunities; Self-Integration can be gained through social identity and networks in the workplace (Social Cohesion).

Siegrist and Peter's (2000) research extends beyond the biopsychosocial impact of Effort-Reward Imbalance, with the added dimension of consideration of the brain's reward system, blood pressure and heart rate. Indeed, Siegrist cites research that indicates higher work and home systolic blood pressure in men with higher Effort-Reward Imbalance and significantly higher blood pressure for the high stress group when at work (Sing *et al.* 1998; cited in Siegrist, 2002). Although this research was limited to white collar workers in a Dutch computer company, it does offer compelling insight into the potentials for physical ill-health as a result of Effort-Reward Imbalance.

A high proportion of common workplace illnesses fall within the psychosocial sphere and as such, are difficult to manage via traditional occupational health channels, on account of the fact

that cause and effect are difficult to determine, due to the complex interplay of (variously) biological, psychological, social and macro level components. The psychosocial perspective highlights the potential impact of, and interplay between, social, cultural and environmental factors and their impact on physical and psychological well-being with the "onset of psychosocial-induced symptoms…predisposed by a vulnerability generated from a combination of biological, psychological and environmental risk factors" (Lunt *et al.* 2007; p.vi). The difficulty in finding causal associations is also highlighted by Waddell and Burton (2006), who comment that it is the more subjective perceptions relating to work that produce stronger associations and, where causal relationships have been identified the effect sizes are usually small (also, see Faragher *et al.* 2005; Tsutsumi and Kawakami, 2004). In light of this more holistic perspective on occupational health and well-being, the relative importance of QoWL factors becomes increasingly salient as their potential impact on psychological and physical well-being are becoming more widely recognised and understood (see Waddell and Burton, 2006).

2.3 Claimed Business Benefits Arising from Addressing/Enhancing QoWL

2.3.1 Organisational Commitment and Labour Turnover

Organisational Commitment is defined as the degree of psychological attachment an employee feels towards their organisation and the organisational values, mission and objectives. High Organisational Commitment is widely held to be correlated with lower rates of sickness absence and intention to quit and enhanced job performance. The central premise is that high employee commitment reflects psychological attachment, i.e. high identification with the goals, and objectives of the employing organisation sponsoring gains in employee input and performance (e.g. LePine *et al.* 1997; Vandenberghe, 2015; Yalabik *et al.* 2015).

Arguably the whole idea of even looking at QoWL emerged because employers wanted to increase productivity through motivating employees. Therefore, the dominant perspective on QoWL relates to attempts to link identified components to business outcomes (e.g. reduced turnover, lower absenteeism, higher productivity etc.). Employee organisational commitment has been found to have a significant indirect effect on intention to quit (Vandenberghe *et al.* 2004) and re-recruitment costs have been estimated at up to 150% of annual salary (Curtis and Wright, 2001) making losing staff a costly business. Intention to quit has been linked to a number of QoWL related constructs including; employee engagement (Havlovic, 1991; Lunt *et al.* 2007); working hours (Carlson *et al.* 2009); autonomy (Liljegren and Ekberg, 2009), quality

of leader-member exchange (Graen *et al.* 1982; Vecchio, 1982; 1985), job satisfaction (Agho *et al.* 1993; Carsten and Specter, 1987; Cote and Morgan, 2002; Lambert *et al.* 2001; Steel and Ovalle, 1984) and work-life balance policies (Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Eaton, 2001; Pohlen Kean, 2002).

Meyer *et al.* (2002) (cited in Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009) explored organisational commitment and found that affective commitment was the strongest predictor of intention to quit and likelihood of leaving the organisation. These authors go on to claim that enhancing an employee's emotional connection with the organisation, e.g. through fair treatment, socio-economic support and a challenging/fulfilling job, in turn increases affective commitment and, correspondingly decreases employee disposition to leave, all of which can potentially be achieved through enhancing the aspects of QoWL cited above. These authors also suggest that intra-organisational factors play a part in intention to quit, with a key predictor for withdrawal being that of the employee's supervisor.

Towers Watson (formerly Towers Perrin) define well-being as encompassing physical health, psychological health and social health and espouse that "because time spent at work is such a huge part of modern life, the workplace has become a major factor in individual health and well-being" (Towers Watson, 2009; p1). Their own data gathered through client interactions has yielded results that suggest that the key factors in improving employee well-being include career development opportunities, supportive working environment, recognition of achievement and collaboration. The company claim that their data shows that improved employee well-being does reduce staff turnover. More recent research by Towers Watson (2012/2013) indicate that in the next 2-3 years two thirds of organisations intend to increase support in the area of employee health and well-being. Furthermore, their research suggests that 40% of stress can be attributed to working hours, 34% to accessing work outside of working hours on account of technology and 28% can be attributed to a lack of work-life balance which would support the need for greater focus and attention to QoWL. Whilst the conclusions presented by Towers Watson lack the scientific rigour of academic research, it may be imprudent to disregard the findings without some consideration. The fact that the aspects identified by the Towers Watson research mirror many of the aspects presented in the extant literature discussed in this chapter, could be interpreted as adding dimensionality to the body of existing QoWL literature by presenting a degree of confirmation from a very applied/practical perspective. Given the complexity of findings from the academic literature, such applied studies, whilst potentially caveated by their lack of methodological rigour, might feasibly offer organisations a more accessible and straight forward answer to their questions about how practically to enhance employee QoWL.

Some studies relate QoWL to Organisational Commitment under the assumption that if employees are enjoying good QoWL they will be less likely to leave the company. Organisational Commitment is generally recognised as a three component model; *affective commitment,* which describes an emotional commitment; *continuance,* which relates to the perception of the cost of leaving the organisation; and, *normative commitment,* which defines the situation when an employee feels they have a responsibility to stay in the organisation and support it (Somers, 2010). Somers' (2010) research found that those employees who scored highest on affective commitment showed lowest intention to quit, a finding supported by other research (e.g. Alcover *et al.* 2012; Bietry and Creusier, 2015; Schoemmel and Jonsson, 2014) but that the scores for the other two components also influence employee commitment, but to a lesser degree. So in the case where an employee has high levels of continuance commitment alongside high affective and normative commitment, the outcome is held to be generally beneficial to the organisation. In relation to actual turnover however, the results of Somers' (2010) study are less compelling. The only significant difference detected was between the *very high commitment* group and the *very low commitment* group.

Somers' (2010) findings expose an important caveat to the research relating to aspects and outcomes of QoWL, in that demonstrating the direction of causality can be difficult, especially when dealing with psychological/emotional outcomes. For example, while measurement of staff turnover might prove illuminating in identifying trends across an organisation, such analysis can sponsor misleading conclusions if not supported by in-depth, high quality exit interviews in order to establish reasons for quitting, i.e. quantitative evidence may provide insight into *'who'* (by function and grade), *'how many'*, and *'where'*, but not '*why'*. Even then, if employees are feeling disillusioned enough that they are leaving the organisation, they may not feel compelled to share their reasons, particularly if they relate to psychological distress. Many work organisations can be described as 'data-poor' in this area.

2.3.2 Economic Performance/Business Performance

Ultimately, work organisations have to perform effectively to survive. A poorly performing organisation will wither quickly, particularly in today's global marketplace. As a result, many studies take the employer perspective by highlighting the potential business benefits of addressing and enhancing aspects of employee QoWL, citing gains in employee performance/productivity (e.g. Baltes *et al.* 1999; Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Eaton, 2001; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998; Kim *et al.* 2014; Markham *et al.* 2010; Schein *et al.* 1977). The 2008 'Black Review' *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow* cites research that suggests that those organisations

rated as the 'Best Companies to Work for in America' earned double the average market return as compared with similarly matched companies not listed (Edmans, 2008; cited Black, 2008). Furthermore, the *Sunday Times* rating of the 'Best Companies to Work for in the UK' suggests that these organisations have higher levels of staff engagement and an average 13% lower staff turnover, alongside half the rate of the UK average sickness absence, as well as outperforming the Financial Times Stock Exchange (FTSE) 1000 on the stock market (Brandon, 2006; cited in Black, 2008).

In his study of the service industry, Lau (2000) suggests that employees who enjoy good QoWL will provide better customer service and foster more positive relationships with clients with a resulting improvement in the profitability of the organisation (also see, Harter *et al.* 2002; Salanova *et al.* 2005). Lau defines QoWL as "...the favourable conditions and environments of a workplace that support and promote employee satisfaction by providing them with rewards, job security, and growth opportunities" (2000; p.424). However, it should be noted that it is very difficult to conduct robust studies of any causal relationship between subjective ratings of QoWL and outcome variables such as turnover rates or profit/loss, due to the difficulty in controlling for effects attributable to intervening variables. It is apparent that many of the claims of such effects are not well substantiated by strong evidence, and that evidence which is available is predominantly associative. Lau (2000) further suggests that recruitment of the right employees in the first instance is also key and that skills can be taught, whereas the right attitude must be recruited for. QoWL participation is significant in determining most business performance measures in the study according to the author; however, no statistical significance resulted from the analysis, although the companies with QoWL programs did have higher profit margins.

Research suggests that in any organisation seeking to implement change, management commitment to the process and leadership which is demonstrated through sharing relevant information, providing opportunities for participation and allocating resources is paramount to ensuring employee QoWL is maintained during the process of change (DeJoy *et al.* 2010). DeJoy *et al.* (2010) assert that "creating healthier organisations should be good for both employees and bottom-line business performance" (p140). However, results are difficult to quantify given the often subjective nature of QoWL alongside the fact that research does not take place in a vacuum and cannot be isolated by external factors e.g. economic changes.

Overall, it is evident that many businesses recognise the need to look after the well-being of their employees. This is amply demonstrated by the likes of AstraZeneca, an international organisation specialising in pharmaceutical manufacturing. AstraZeneca introduced a well-

being initiative that incorporated improving work-life balance, rehabilitation and treatment services and health promotion. The business benefits of the initiative included significantly reduced insurance spend, 31% lower absence rates than UK average (as reported by the Confederation of British Industry), being ranked in the top 10% of Dow Jones Sustainability Performers worldwide, and in the top 20% in Europe. It is a challenge however, to isolate the impact of the QoWL interventions with other external factors. So while causal relationships are difficult to establish, what is also apparent is that none of the extant literature examined in the course of this review asserts that investing in employee QoWL is bad for the bottom line. Absence of proof does not equal validation, however, the balance of evidence presented here strongly suggests that enhancing employee QoWL can yield business benefits. However, it requires firstly that an organisation appreciates the potential benefits, and while high demand for work remains in some countries, there appears little motivation to invest in employee QoWL.

2.3.3 Sickness Absence and Health

From an organisational and economic perspective, absenteeism and employee ill health presents a considerable cost not only to businesses, but to employees and their families, and the economy as a whole. The cost of absenteeism to the UK economy has been estimated to be between £103- 129 billion, reflecting approximately 175 million working days lost *per annum* (Black and Frost, 2011).

As indicated in previous sections of this review, enhanced QoWL has been implicated in reduction of absenteeism (Bokerman and Ilmakunnas, 2008; Dionne and Dostie, 2007; Koyuneu *et al.* 2006; Lunt *et al.* 2007; Mangione, Quinn and Seashore, 1975), reduced intention to quit and improved job satisfaction (Akerlof and Yellen, 1988; McEvoy and Cascio, 1985). Furthermore, Katz *et al.* (1985) cite various sources that assert that improved QoWL and good industrial relations systems also have a positive impact on absenteeism rates (e.g. Dyer and Schwab, 1982; Nicholson, Brown and Chadwick-Jones, 1976; Steers and Rhodes, 1978).

Much has been made of the claim that 'work is good for your health and well-being'. Specifically, it has been claimed that “there is a strong theoretical case, supported by a great deal of background evidence, that work and paid employment are generally beneficial for physical and mental health and well-being. The major proviso is that this depends on the quality of the job and the social context. Nevertheless, the available evidence is on representative jobs, whatever their quality and defects, and shows that on average they are beneficial for health” (Waddell and Burton 2006, p10). This conclusion was caveated, to some degree by Black

(2008), in her conclusion that 'good work is good for you', although the definition of good work offered was somewhat under-articulated.

According to Waddell and Burton (2006) work has several key functions, namely, providing economic resources (although they do note that what constitutes 'sufficient' pay is as yet undefined), meeting psychosocial needs, contributing to an individual's identity and sense of self, but that it can also pose hazards to physical and mental well-being at times too. Unemployment, the authors assert, is strongly associated with poor health, higher mortality, poorer mental health and higher levels of medical consultation. They conclude that "what ultimately matters is the balance between the positive and negative effects of work and how that compares with worklessness" (p2), tentatively proposing that those factors that make a job good include; safety, fair pay, social gradients in health, job security, personal development, feeling fulfilled, non-discriminatory and accommodating autonomy, job satisfaction and good communication.

Where aspects of QoWL are poor, mental ill health and stress can result (Bliese and Castro, 2000; Evans, 20001; Lunt *et al.* 2007; Siegrist *et al.* 2002; Schirmer and Lopez, 2001), but it is difficult to isolate where ill health is related to poor QoWL and where it is the result of other factors, or indeed, a combination of factors. While the exact degree of harm poor QoWL might induce cannot be measured, it does seem apparent that ill health can be reduced through enhancing employee QoWL. Although it is not within the remit of the current scope of research to explore the health benefits/disbenefits of investment in employee QoWL, it is worth noting the ostensible associations.

Establishing root causes of sickness absence and ill health is challenging as employees may not always be willing to share the exact reason for their absence (e.g. in cases of mental ill health), making determining causality difficult. However, the research presented in this review does indicate strong intuitive associations between poor QoWL and sickness absence rates, indeed the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Review *Is Work Good for your Health and Well-Being* (Waddell and Burton, 2006) concludes that "work is generally good for your health and well-being, **provided** you have 'a good job'" (Waddell and Burton p.34) and while defining *exactly* what constitutes a "good job" may be an unrealistic undertaking, it can reasonably be concluded on the balance of evidence presented here that good QoWL will positively influence employee sickness absence rates.

2.4 Defining QoWL

QoWL has been the subject of much enquiry and a myriad of potential influencing factors proposed, as discussed here. However, a clear definition has yet to emerge, perhaps due to the fact that much of the research to date has focussed on specific aspects of QoWL, rather than on the concept as a whole (e.g. Danish and Usman, 2010; Igbaria and Greenhaus, 2007; Koyuneu *et al.* 2006; Lazear, 2000; Morrison, 2004; Sperlich *et al.* 2012; Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009; Wagner and Harter, 2006). Such approaches essentially bypass defining QoWL, by focussing on defining aspects of the concept that might lead to greater or lesser job satisfaction, while the concept as a whole is left unresolved. Definitions of QoWL and what contributes to it are varied, for example, Mirvis and Lawler (1984) suggest that QoWL encompasses the "characteristics of the work and work environment that influence employees' work lives" (p.199) and the "criteria of employee welfare and wellbeing" (p.199) and Nadler and Lawler (1984) define QoWL as "a way of thinking about people, work and organisations, its distinctive elements are (i) a concern about the impact of work on people, as well as on organisational effectiveness; and (ii) the idea of participation in organisational problem-solving and decision making" (p.26). More recently, Serey (2006) proposed that QoWL is comprised of using one's talents, decision-making capability and initiative to triumph in challenging situations; engaging in activities that are meaningful to the employee; having sufficient role clarity to facilitate goal achievement; feeling that one belongs; gaining a sense of pride in one's work. Lau *et al.* (2001) define QoWL as "the favourable working conditions that support and enhance satisfaction by providing employees with rewards, job security and career growth opportunities" (cited Sheel *et al.* 2012; p.292) and Hackman and Oldham (1975) propose five influencing factors; task variety, feedback, task identity, task significance and autonomy – which are assessed in their Job Diagnostic Survey.

Part of the difficulty in defining QoWL rests on the subjective nature of the concept, whereby, for example, what one employee considers to be poor working conditions, another may not identify as having any negative impact on their QoWL (Vinopal, 2012). Furthermore, the value an individual places on aspects of working life, and their impact on that individual may vary by individual factors such as age, gender or family role, as well as by personality (Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991). Ultimately, QoWL likely includes elements of all of the aspects of working life referenced in the definitions presented above and discussed in this literature review, and what is consistent among definitions is that QoWL is concerned with 'humanising' jobs to enhance the employee experience of their working lives, as well as to limit the negative impact of working life on the employee both in, and outside of work. While there may be some

variance in the exact aspects that influence QoWL, definitions encompass aspects of the intrinsic satisfactions to be gained through work (enrichment, challenge, opportunity to develop), as well as those factors providing satisfaction extrinsically (pay, job title, value) (Watson, 1995).

Shamir and Salomon (1985) capture the essence of these aspects in their definition of QoWL as "an individual's job related well-being and the extent to which he is satisfied with the rewards, fulfilment at job and enjoys the absence of stress and other negative personal consequences" (p.455). Although this definition of QoWL may not be the most recent, it does capture the essence of the potential for aspects of QoWL to enhance, or erode the employees' experience of work and it is this definition which was accepted as a specific 'working definition' for the purpose of this research.

2.5 Conclusions

The evolution of understanding of factors relating to QoWL is complex and multi-dimensional. Interest in management systems and practices grew in response to changes in production techniques with the rise of industry and saw the exploration of *democratic humanist* approaches (e.g. Maslow's (1954) *Hierarchy of Needs*; Blauner's (1964) *Four Dimensions of Alienation*). The emergence of Biopsychosocial Perspectives have more recently presented theories around the interplay between the cultural, social and environmental conditions in which people work, and the potential impact of these factors on occupational health and well-being. Better management of aspects of QoWL might enhance these factors and reduce the likelihood of occupational ill-health.

The industrial revolution and the continued evolution of organisations and technology means that often employees now work with large networks of people, many of whom they may never/rarely interact with on a face-to-face basis. From the early one dimensional attempts (e.g. Taylorist approach, 1939) a more complex, multi-dimensional picture has emerged, limited not only to employee motivation but to the wider concept of QoWL.

A wide range of possible contributing factors in relation to QoWL have been proposed, resulting in a plethora of possible influencing factors. Financial and non-financial reward would appear to be important contributors to QoWL, with the notable caveats that such rewards are most beneficial when combined and meaningful to the employee. Career progression, training and development opportunities represent a further form of reward, where they are desired by the

employee, and as such appear to positively impact upon QoWL through enhancing intrinsic satisfaction and employee perceptions that the organisation values them.

Peer relationships, when positive, can serve to enhance employee perceptions of QoWL, but can lead to dissatisfaction, poor performance, absenteeism and intention to quit, when combative or unsupportive in nature. While positive peer relationships might enhance QoWL, employees also need a degree of autonomy over how they do their job, and the hours and location from which they choose to work (where feasible in relation to the nature of the work). Clarity of job role may be the key in balancing peer relationships and autonomy in order that both aspects are represented and beneficial.

Working conditions have been associated with a range of negative health outcomes when poor and combined with a perceived lack of compensation in other areas of working life. Employee engagement has been applied in relation to working conditions and behavioural safety approaches such that hazards in the environment can be identified and rectified, and this highlights the role of employee engagement in influencing the working environment. Engagement has further been associated with QoWL through enhancing employee perceptions that the organisation values them, and enhancing autonomy. This engagement is however, largely dependent in the most immediate terms on LMX, which when positive is beneficial to the organisation, the leader and the subordinate.

Balancing work and home life effectively has been associated with a range of positive outcomes, including the reduction of home-work conflict, marital conflict and job satisfaction. Balance however, is not simply about being at home for the kids' bedtime, but about the employees' ability to 'switch off' from work when they are at home. Concomitant with work-life balance is working hours, a facet of working life that is increasingly difficult to determine with mobile technology enabling employees in certain roles to engage with their work 24/7. Working hours are no longer limited to the time an employee is at their desk, and working in a manufacturing, or similar setting might actually offer greater ease of ensuring working hours are adhered to and that there is a clear line between work and home.

The picture in relation to QoWL is clearly complex and multi-faceted. Clarity is needed in order for organisations to be better able to assess and enhance employee QoWL towards the mutual benefit of both organisation and employee. Much of the research to date has been employer driven, motivated by an aspiration to improve quality and productivity (e.g. Dex and Scheibl, 1999; Eaton, 2001; Frey and Jegen, 2001; Galinsky and Johnson, 2001) and Government policy has sought to reduce sickness absence (both short and long-term) to reduce the associated cost of sickness absence and the impact on the National Health Service (e.g. The Black Review,

2008; Waddell and Burton, 2006). While the outcomes of such research may well benefit employee as well as employer, there is a notable absence of research aimed primarily at the benefit of the employee.

Furthermore, the majority of research is limited by its focus on only a small number of possible QoWL related factors (e.g. Baruch, 2000; Felstead *et al.* 2012; Hill *et al.* 2001; Kim, 2014; Markham *et al.* 2010; Owens, 2006; Somers, 2010) and often outcomes are related to job satisfaction, rather than to the more holistic experience of QoWL (e.g. Allen, 1992; Baltes *et al.* 1999; Bowling *et al.* 2010; Cote and Morgan, 2002; Frey and Jegen, 2001; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998; Green and Heywood, 2008; Lopes *et al.* 2014; Watson *et al.* 1996; Wayne *et al.* 2002). Other research focuses on only a single, or small range of companies/industry (e.g. Bitmis and Ergeneli, 2011; Campion *et al.* 1993; Efraty and Sirgy, 1990; Hill *et al.* 2001; Igbaria *et al.* 1994; Medina *et al.* 2005). While this creates a somewhat fragmented picture of QoWL, making a more holistic perspective difficult to decipher, it is perhaps unsurprising given the enormity of the subject and the diversity of organisations, and a small slice of this has been presented in the literature examined here. It is also often difficult to ascertain the quality of these studies due to a lack of detail in the articles that present the research, specifically with measurement tools being absent (e.g. Danish and Usman, 2010; Jackson and Johnson, 2012; Kim *et al.* 2010; Langfred, 2004; O'Driscoll and Randall, 1999), thus making an assessment of the tool impossible. While research focussing on few, or single aspects of QoWL have the potential to offer depth of insight, it fails to present a more holistic view of QoWL and the potential interplay between those aspects most salient to employees.

Research conducted by PriceWaterhouseCooper for the Black Review (2008) asserts that there is no 'one size fits all' solution with regard to employee well-being, and by association, QoWL, and as such a measure that can assess where the weaknesses/potential risks are and can signpost towards the type of intervention required needs to be developed. All in all, the research presented here aims to address some of these deficits by taking a holistic view of factors that enhance or erode QoWL. Informed via an inductive approach to ascertain precisely what employees feel impacts upon their QoWL. Furthermore, in contrast to the majority of published QoWL studies, it will draw insight from a diverse sample of respondents from a range of job roles, job grades, industries and sectors.

Chapter 3: Study 1 - A Qualitative Exploration of Employees' Perspectives on Variables Impacting on Quality of Working Life

3.0 Summary

The following chapter presents findings from a series of individual interviews and focus groups (N=36) conducted during 2010-2011. Thematic analysis performed on the resulting transcripts revealed that broadly equivalent themes were raised across the different groups, indicating a significant consensus over key influences on QoWL. However, the emphasis placed on the identified themes varied between the groups. While it proved possible to define an array of themes and their constituent components/facets, it was also clear that there were close couplings and intuitive linkages between some of the themes. Furthermore, findings suggest that what respondents portrayed as a deficit in some aspects of QoWL can (to varying degrees) be balanced by the presence of other more positive aspects, for example, social cohesion in the Recruitment Consultants interviewed appears to offset lack of flexibility and poor work-life balance.

Additionally, in some instances a deficit in certain aspects of QoWL appears to increase the salience of other aspects. For example, paramedics appeared to offset perceived lack of engagement and consultation by their organisation, against high intrinsic job satisfaction through helping others in their daily work. In many respects, QoWL deficits presented as a primary orientation. This was exemplified throughout the focus groups and one-to-one interviews by the fact that the greatest discussion (by volume) across all sessions centered on those aspects of QoWL perceived to be deficient. An arising inference is that QoWL might be most saliently defined by the relative 'absence' of valued components, i.e. a degradation/attrition model. This was particularly evident in the comments made by both paramedics and miners, whereby paramedics perceived a lack of engagement and consultation on the part of their organization, whilst Miners stated that they felt under time pressure due to a lack of resourcing.

The overall findings are discussed with reference to the published evidence from the QoWL and related literature. It is concluded that a set of shared core influences on QoWL are relevant to the majority of employees and that greater understanding of these variables and their interplay might yield useful insight. All in all, eight themes were identified, characterisable as *Recognition; Trust, Fairness and Equity; Job Demands; Social Cohesion; Communication; Intrinsic Job Satisfaction; Conflict;* and *Perceived Organisational Support.* The fact that this

analysis did not reveal any new, previously undiscovered themes is not considered surprising, in view of the breadth of established research findings in this area. However, the boundaries arising from specific themes are considered to be broader and in some instances more subtle than previously cast in published work. The primary contribution is held to relate to the study highlighting the salience of the eight identified themes and enhancing insights into how, why and in what ways they are salient to employees.

3.1 Introduction

In this study a data-driven approach was adopted using a combination of focus groups and one-to-one interviews to explore employee perspectives on variables that impact on their Quality of Working Life (QoWL). The majority of previous studies of QoWL have been quantitative and survey based, and typically use large batteries of items. These predominantly correlational studies have, in sum, identified a bewildering array of variables, to the extent that some authors have commented that, from the perspective of application, the net result is at risk of producing more heat than light (e.g. The Job Diagnostic Survey; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). The core aim of this thesis was to attempt to increase clarity in the area by focusing on employee perspectives, in particular, to explore the degree to which different sub-populations shared perspectives on core components of QoWL and, how and in what ways the identified variables operate and are important to them, i.e. to delineate the variables that offered greater or lesser enhancement of QoWL and the degree to which these variables might be homogeneous.

The selection of a more organic, data driven approach to explore QoWL research through semi-structured interviews and focus groups was considered in relation to the claimed strengths of this approach in other contexts (e.g. Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999) as a means of gaining detailed insight into the nature and extent of shared and divergent perspectives of respondents from a range of employment sectors, organisation size, and job.

Prior to embarking on this research, no other studies directly grounded in eliciting employee perspectives were evident. Although there is a veritable glut of research in this area, previous studies have predominantly applied quantitative, generally survey based methods (e.g. Breaugh, 1985; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2006; Morrow and McElroy, 1987; Wayne *et al.* 2002). Typical questions used seem to have evolved from a set of hypotheses and assumptions on the part of the researcher(s), or adapted from previous research - of a similar nature - regarding the most suitable variables for inclusion/measurement and the most appropriate questions to ask (e.g. Cole *et al.* 2005; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). A further limitation is that most previous studies are based upon samples derived from single organisations or, in a smaller number of

instances, a discrete industry or sector, thus raising questions regarding the generalizability of reported findings (e.g. Gifford *et al.* 2002; Hales, 1987; Lau, 2000). Overall, the current research sought to achieve a clearer focus, through direct engagement with employees, to elicit their views on core influences on QoWL. The decision to adopt a qualitative study in the first instance reflected the author's perspective that:

- the majority of previous mainstream research in this area was methodologically top-down and in general wasn't the product of direct, interactive, engagement with the subject matter (i.e. employees);
- the aforementioned methodologically top-down approach was predominantly correlational and routinely involved discrete sub-populations, thus increasing the risk of identifying weak or misleading relationships; and being a potential barrier to achieving a focus on core influences;
- using employee perspectives as the basis for study offered the opportunity to interpret the arising findings in light of the established research, while also increased the potential for new, previously undiscovered insights to emerge;
- a qualitative approach offered the potential to generate insight into not only what was meaningful to employees, but also the language they used to describe and articulate this. This was considered important not only in itself, but also to enhance the face validity of the subsequent survey and scale development work carried out;
- arising insights had the potential to offer an ecologically sound and robust grounding, thus benefiting from a sharper focus than many other previous studies, suitable for subsequent stages of the research that sought to establish the generalisability of findings via more formal (quantifiable) methods.

The use of a more organic approach, for example, moving away from the hypothetico-deductive research previously conducted, supported the premise that the researcher sought to *generate* theory in relation to which variables might be of most importance to employees in relation to QoWL, rather than embark upon quantitative enquiry on the basis of *a priori* ideas of what should be explored. According to Henwood and Pidgeon "the methodology of science itself has focused almost exclusively upon techniques for justification, either as verification or criticism, and has neglected those of discovery" (Henwood and Pidgeon 1992; p101) and it would appear that this has largely been the case in relation to previous QoWL related enquiry. Therefore, use

of more interpretative analysis techniques via qualitative method enables/facilitates the review and revision of theory that may have been the long accepted 'truth'.

3.1.1 Context and Relevance to the Main Study

The organic approach used in this study aimed to establish a detailed insight into employee perspectives on key influences on QoWL. Accordingly, this not only produced insight into salient variables and how they operated, but also framed and provided a firm foundation for the later quantitative research.

3.1.1.1 Aim

- To explore and characterise employee perspectives on variables that impact upon their QoWL. To uncover the way in which these variables are important to employees and, to explore the extent to which they share a common perspective in this domain.

3.1.1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this research were to:

- recruit a sample of employees across a range of different employment sectors/organisation types, job types and job grade;
- explore and characterise employee perspectives on contributory influences on QoWL;
- explore the nature and extent of consensus/demographic difference on salient variables.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Participants

Participants were recruited on a voluntary basis via an opportunity sample of different work organisations (N=4; see Appendix A - Sample Characteristics). This was also supplemented by the use of a mixed group of participants (N=4) recruited through the researcher's own contacts via a social media site advertisement that asked for study participants for the research. Participants were recruited via emails as sent out by the participant organisation and through contacts known to the researcher. Reflecting the British Psychological Society Code for ethical conduct (BPS, 2009), respondents were reminded of the voluntary nature of their participation

at the start of each session and informed that if they did not wish to take part that they could: a) leave at any point without giving a reason; or b) remain in the session but abstain from the discussion. That their contribution to the discussion could be removed at a later date and instead reported using a non-attributable form (a copy of the University of Bath, Department of Psychology Ethics Committee approval for this study is provided at Appendix A). Participating organisations included an NHS ambulance trust, a local authority Fire Service, a mining/chemical processing company and a recruitment consultancy and included participants from a variety of different job grades and roles. The mixed group comprised of teachers, a business consultant, an entrepreneur; as well as managerial, white collar and blue collar workers (see Appendix B - Sample characteristics).

Focus group sessions (N=28) were principally formed using cohorts of individuals working at a common grade and/or department within a similar organisation. In all but one case, participants knew each other and had previously worked together in some capacity prior to attending the session. This was felt to be a valuable feature, as shared experience and reference points likely contributed to the quality of discussion, whilst the associated relevance may potentially have enhanced the likelihood of individual contributions (Morgan, 1993). One-to-one interviews (N=8) consisted of participants who were either unable to attend a focus group session due to scheduling or were of a sufficiently different job role or grade within the organisation to make them more appropriate for independent interview, for example, the Managing Director of the recruitment consultancy was interviewed independently so as not to influence employee responses within the focus group.

3.2.2 Design

3.2.2.1 Method of data collection

A key decision relating to the most appropriate approach to data gathering concerned the use of individual versus group elicitation techniques. In itself this has been and continues to be, the subject of lively debate amongst different researchers. Morgan (1993), for example, contrasts with other authors, e.g. Kitzinger (1995) in making less of a distinction over the relative merits of individual versus group based approaches, commenting that "In many ways, focus groups and in-depth interviews are very similar and can be equally effective in answering research questions. Whilst proponents of group approaches, (e.g. Merton, Fiske, and Kendall, 1990), often cited as having developed focus group research methodology, present the focused interview as an "interviewing technique that can be used with either individuals or groups" (p140).

Originally applied in the area of commercial market research, the strengths of focus group methods have gained increasing popularity within the social sciences (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999) on account of the fact that "focus group based investigation does not aim to be 'representative' in the same manner as quantitative survey research. Rather, the aim of focus group research is to explore shared ways of making sense of critical issues" (Weyman *et al.* 2006; p40). The method has been found to be particularly useful when exploring complex socio-cultural issues and is often used in the assessment and exploration of safety culture.

Crabtree *et al.* (1993) claim that there has been little comparison of the relative merits of focus group versus individual interview techniques. However, many researchers seem to fall into one camp or the other when it comes to using these methods as a means to elicit data, as both methods entail specific pros and cons. According to Merton *et al.* (1990) focus groups can reduce inhibitions and allow respondents to speak more openly about a given subject matter. Moreover, the group interaction aspect allows for respondents to 'bounce off' each other and can trigger recall of details that might otherwise have been forgotten. Fuller *et al.* (1993) advocate the use of focus groups in the development of surveys because they allow the researcher to identify relevant topics for inclusion and the appropriate language to use, while Morgan (1993) promotes the use of focus group research because they allow for greater group control of points discussed and accordingly reduce the likelihood of the researcher leading the discussion. However, the limitations of employing focus group methodology for the gathering of data include the fact that the view presented is that of the group and may not reflect the view of all its members. It can also be the case that respondents' views change throughout the course of the discussion as a result of this.

Conversely, in a one-to-one interview setting, a dynamic exists only between the interviewer and the respondent "synchronous… …of time and space" (Opdenakker, 2006; p.1). The interviewer sets the agenda and the respondent provides insight into the agenda items presented. In order to successfully elicit information from the respondent, the interviewer must build a level of rapport with the respondent and as a result perceptions of the interviewer can play a bigger part in the one-to-one interview setting than in the focus group. The advantage the interviewer has in this context is the ability to be able to attend to the social cues of just one individual. According to Opdenakker (2006; p.1) "social cues, such as voice, intonation, body language etc. of the interviewee can give the interviewer a lot of extra information that can be added to the verbal answer of the interviewee on a question" (Opdenakker 2006; p.1). However in general, the interviewer must guide more in a one-to-one setting, given that the respondent does not have others to interact with *per se*. Therefore, the one-to-one interview can be less

organic than the focus group, but one-to-one interviews do remove the possibility of group think effects (Morgan, 1993).

One possible advantage of both the one-to-one and focus group interview is that the "synchronous communication" (Opdenakker, 2006, p.1) can result in an immediate response, thus ensuring that comments are spontaneous and not overly considered. This does however require the interviewer to be able to listen to interviewee responses and at the same time formulate the next question or prompt to keep the dialogue moving in the desired direction/relative to the subject being explored. This is particularly important when conducting semi-structured interviews (as with the current study) since there may be certain points the interviewer wishes to cover across all interviews, as well as other aspects of the interview that are open to being led in the direction the interviewee or group take it.

Given the evidence presented above, it was decided that complementary use of both individual and group approaches was most preferable towards exploring opinions within a group setting, whereby groups "should be used to encourage people to engage with one another, verbally formulate their ideas and draw out the cognitive structures which previously have been unarticulated" (Kitzinger, 1995, p.106), whereas one-to-one interviews allow people to express their views independent of group think effects. Within the current study, the allocation of respondents into one-to-one interviews and focus groups was primarily as a consequence of the level of access to staff offered by participating organisations. This enabled the generation of a dataset that embodied the strengths of both approaches involved. Overall, taking previous research insights into consideration, mixed-method data collection (i.e. using both focus groups and one-to-one interviews) was deemed the most appropriate method for data collection.

3.2.3 Discussion/Interview Protocol Development

Topics chosen for discussion/interview were based on insights from the literature (see Chapter 2) and following detailed discussions with subject matter experts (N=2). Given that the primary aim of the sessions was to elicit employee perspectives in an open and associative manner, the questions were designed to take account of this, being open ended and able to cast a high level of generality from participants. Each topic was supplemented with prompts to help exemplify specific issues of interest - again these were open-ended. Overall, data gathering sought to explore the following:

- employee understanding of the term QoWL;
- employee perspectives on the most salient variables to QoWL and their relative influence on QoWL;
- factors that enhanced employee QoWL;
- factors that eroded QoWL;
- the language and terminology used by employees when articulating precise concepts relating to QoWL.

A semi-structured approach was adopted to encourage discussion and guide it further, whilst also allowing sufficient flexibility for respondents to shape the nature and direction of the topics being discussed. All items included were open ended to elicit free responses from one-to-one interviews and to generate discussion in the focus group setting. One-to-one interviews ranged in duration from 9:56 minutes to 50:00 minutes. Focus groups ranged in duration from 13:15 minutes to 87:10 minutes, although in this instance the shortest duration for a group discussion was for the paramedics who were called out to an emergency shortly after starting the focus group.

The same protocol was applied to both the focus group discussions and the one-to-one interviews. Justification for this approach remains within the aim of the study, which was to elicit employee perspectives on the subject matter. As such, the protocol (see Appendix C – Interview Consent Form; and Appendix D – Interview Protocol) consisted of a number of prompts that could be used to stimulate discussion in the case of conversation lag, or topic drift off. The prompts were employed more often in one-to-one interviews where participants did not have colleagues to engage in discussion with, thereby necessitating a greater degree of interviewer involvement in stimulating discussion.

3.2.3.1 Moderating the Discussions

According to Oppenheim (2000) interviewers and/or focus group moderators must be able to "approach as nearly as possible the notion that every respondent has been asked the same questions, with the same meaning, in the same words, same intonation, same sequence, in the same setting and so on" (p.67). Oppenheim (2000) also acknowledges, however, that this is "...a manifest impossibility" (p.67) and goes on to explain that a skilled moderator can make the same questions *mean* the same thing to different individuals.

The initial choice of focus group moderator(s) explored the possibility of using an employee from each of the participating organisations, an external consultant, or the study researcher.

Factors such as the range of organisations involved, amount of travel required between sites, significant time investment involved were considered. The ability to use an employee from each organisation was quickly dismissed because there were not enough suitably proficient moderators with appropriate knowledge of the subject matter to allow for consistency across the different organisations, whilst use of an employee from each participating organisation would contravene employee confidentiality in terms of any comments made and also inhibit their ability to be open regarding the less satisfactory aspects of their QoWL. Use of an external consultant to moderate the discussions was also quickly dismissed due to time constraints (i.e. time required to train and equip the individual to moderate the sessions) and the associated costs involved. It was decided however, that the same moderator was ideally needed to ensure sufficient consistency was achieved across all sessions. Hence, given that the study researcher already had seven years' experience in conducting focus group and one-to-one interviews in organisational settings, was already knowledgeable of the subject area and it would cost less, they were considered most appropriate to act as moderator for the investigation.

3.2.4 Procedure

3.2.4.1 Protocol piloting

Three pilot sessions were carried out – one focus group (N=3) and two one-to-one interviews that involved a sample of paramedics (N=5). This pilot work allowed for the testing of the question set/prompts. The pilot sessions also allowed for the moderator to become familiar with the questions/prompts used and for participants to provide feedback regarding moderator performance. These pilot sessions demonstrated the adequacy of the questions set/protocol used and allowed for the responses to be included in the final data set.

3.2.4.2 Data collection

Upon completion of the pilot sessions, specific interview schedules were agreed with the participating organisations. All focus groups (N=28) and one-to-one interviews (N=8) were conducted on-site at each participating organisation; each being of 60-120 minutes duration. One further mixed focus group, comprised of four volunteers recruited independently of their own organisation, was also conducted.

At each session participants were provided with a standard set of instructions and given the opportunity to ask questions/clarify any aspect of the instructions prior to commencement of the focus group/interview. The digital recorder was set to 'record' and the focus group moderator

proceeded by asking the group members/interviewee to introduce themselves, and to provide details of their role within their organisation. The moderator then proceeded to 'prompt' participants, using the focus group/interview protocol to elicit discussion relating to QoWL. When the participants were satisfied they had contributed fully and completely to the session, the moderator then closed the session and thanked participants for their involvement.

3.2.4.3 Data Recording

To reduce the potential for bias and allow for a sufficient level of detailed analysis it was decided that digital recording was necessary so that the moderator could transcribe each session afterwards, to capture not only the points raised but also the language used and general nuances of statements and comments made. Such rich information cannot be gleaned from notes taken during the session when the moderator needs to specifically focus on guiding the discussion and ensure that the group or interviewees are engaged.

Following each session the digital files were downloaded into the transcription programme Express Scribe and later transcribed verbatim. The digital files were then stored and secured with password protection.

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Data Analysis Method Selection

The aim of study 1 was to draw out the key constructs identified by employees as impacting on their QoWL in order to elucidate how and in what ways these variables were considered salient. This was viewed as being of value in itself but was also considered to offer a sound empirically grounded basis for the later stages of this research, which sought to formally confirm the generalisability of findings quantitatively (see, Chapter 4: Study 2a; Chapter 5: Study 2b). In considering choices over the most appropriate approach to data analysis, the relative strengths of the following alternatives were considered:

Discourse analysis - Discourse analysis aims to interrogate the data to the level of the linguistic tools respondents use when engaged in discussion, such as slowing speech for emphasis, choice of words used and metaphors used - to identify shared patterns of speech and understand how people construct individual versions of events. It evolved from research by Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) who were interested in the variability of accounts of the same scientific knowledge and sought a method of analysing differing accounts. According to the aforementioned, information

gathered in the many varied forms of interview and other sociological data are not reflections of reality, rather vary in relation to their context and the function for which they are designed. As such, Discourse Analysis seeks to examine a range of sources in order to understand areas of alignment and difference in scientific knowledge. Given that the aim of the current research was simply to uncover key themes via focus group and interview discussion, this method of analysis was not considered appropriate.

Conversation Analysis - Conversation Analysis was also considered and dismissed given that there is no researcher involvement in the conversations and it is specifically aimed at understanding conversation architecture. The examination of language under this method considers it a social action and that "…verbal interaction exhibits a structure: the shape and form of the ways in which contributions to interaction form a connected series of actions" and "one of the tasks of Conversation Analysis is to discover and describe the architecture of this structure: the properties of the ways in which interaction proceeds through activities produced through successive turns" (Wooffitt, 2005; p.8) and that this is how respondents come to understand a topic of conversation. Again, this method would have been unable to produce the themes the study was designed to elicit and without researcher involvement in the conversations would have left the discussion open to potentially drift away from the intended topic. Furthermore, the researcher required a degree of standardisation of the sessions such that data could be grouped together for interpretation and thematic analysis.

Content Analysis - Content Analysis could otherwise have been used, but this method was also dismissed as it tends to look for those themes that occur most frequently and is theory driven, whereas the current study was aimed at developing the theory itself, rather than working to a pre-existing theory.

The chosen method of data analysis judged to be most appropriate to gain appropriate information from the transcripts was thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is aimed at reducing data down by identifying meaningful categories or themes in a body of data. To do this the researcher abstracts recurring themes from the transcripts, as well as anecdotal evidence as examples to support any given theme. There are three key phases involved in the analysis; (i) initial identification of themes (coding); (ii) grouping the codes under higher level themes; (iii) application of themes and codes to a sample of transcripts and refinement of the themes in response to the sampling. Furthermore, thematic analysis has been used by other studies with similar methodological structure and data attainment requirements [(e.g. Weyman *et al.* 2006); Organisational dynamics and safety culture in UK train operating companies].

3.3.2 Initial Development of Codes

In the first instance, transcripts from the focus groups and the interviews (N=37) were given an initial coding by the researcher. A selection of the transcripts (N=4), selected at random, were then independently coded by the researchers' supervisor and the resulting codes compared and discussed.

A set of initial themes was generated, based upon the natural semantic clustering of codes. The result was two sets of coded transcripts, with two independently constructed definitions of the themes they were considered to represent. The coded transcripts and code definitions were then compared and discussed to formulate a definitive set of themes with definitions of their constituent facets and boundaries (see Table 3.1; Initial Coding Framework).

The initial coding frame was then independently applied by both the researcher and their supervisor to a further sample of transcripts (N=4) and the suitability of the initial codes in capturing/characterising the data was assessed and discussed, resulting in further refinements and amendments to the initial coding frame to include four theme refinements as detailed below:

Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment – On closer inspection, the three sub-themes of Honesty, Trust in Manager and Blame and Fairness of Opportunity, were considered to be encompassed within a broader sub-theme characterisable as *Quality of Relationship between Manager/Supervisor and Employee* under the theme *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff*. Comments relating to this sub-theme centred on employee perceptions of how approachable and fair their manager was, incorporating aspects of trust, the quality of communication between employees and their manager and the degree to which they felt listened to by their manager. Comments exemplifying this interpretation of the data analysis were:

"If you've got the ear of your line manager and find them to be approachable… …that makes life a lot easier". (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company)

In relation to when communication is poor/non-existent, one respondent made a comment about their manager that *"you never see them face to face"* (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service). The lack of contact between management and the respondent lead them to perceive that management were unapproachable and had no idea regarding the realities and challenges faced by front line Paramedic staff.

A more positive perspective of management was presented by one respondent who described a good manager as being *"someone you can go and talk to, who'll listen to you"* (Male, Trainee

Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy), who then went on to explain that their manager met this profile.

Quality of Peer Relationships - Under the headline theme *Quality of Peer Relationships* the three sub-themes *Opportunity for Social Interaction; Camaraderie* and *Isolation* were combined under the subtheme *Camaraderie.* This was because on reflection social interaction and isolation, as well as support, were considered to be facets of *Camaraderie.* Comments relating to relationships at work encompassed all three aspects, as exemplified by the following comments:

"We're more like a sports team with banter going around" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"You want to do well yourself, but you also want to see your colleagues do well as well" (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"Great camaraderie and social life and the team dynamic counter balances the lack of trust in the organisation……it's like family" (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service).

Conflict - because conflict between colleagues was not raised in any of the focus groups or one-to-one interviews this section was removed. However, aspects of employee/manager conflict were accounted for in the sub-theme *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff* (see section *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment* above for examples of comments within this sub-theme).

Perceived Organisational Support - The sub-theme *Organisational Support* was amended and renamed *Perceived Organisational Support* (POS) to reflect discussions that elicited employee *perceptions* of organisational support. Comments relating to this sub-theme encompassed broader elements relating to employee perceptions such as how likely the organisation would be to support them during difficult times, as well as demonstrable commitment by the wider organisation towards employees in general, such as:

"I think there's a bit of people at higher levels sort of protecting themselves as well" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service).

"It feels like the organisation is getting more prescriptive and less trusting" (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Table 3.1. *Initial Coding Framework*

	HEADLINE THEME	SUB-THEMES
1.	Investment in Staff	Access to Training and Development Opportunities
		Non-financial Rewards
		Progression Opportunities
		Normative Feedback
2.	Trust and belief in Fair Treatment	Peer/Social Comparison
		Fairness of Opportunity
		Honesty
		Trust in Manager
		Blame
3.	Job Demands/Workload	Balance between Work and Home Life
		Flexibility and Choice
		Expectations
		Time Pressure
4.	Quality of Peer Relationships	Opportunity for Social Interaction
		Camaraderie
		Isolation
5.	Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff	Consultation
		Involvement and Engagement
		Quality of the Relationship between Manager/Supervisor and Employee
6.	Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	Social Value from doing One's Job
7.	Conflict	Employee/Manager Conflict
		Employee/Employee Conflict
8.	Perceived Organisational Support	Perceived Organisational Support

Final application of the revised coding framework was then carried out. Cross checking of the coding frame allowed for the accuracy of characterisation of each identified theme to be assessed and amended where appropriate. Unfortunately, the stages of evolution of a coding system can be infinite as more and more accurate characterisation of themes is sought. Weston *et al.* (2001) commented of their own qualitative work that "we have come to accept that the process of developing codes is never finished" (p391). However, coding themes can always be 'tweaked' but at some point must be accepted and applied as consistently as possible in order to progress the study further.

Finally iterative application of the coding frame across all thirty-six one-to-one and focus group interviews revealed that some of the sub-themes were redundant or subsumed by other sub-themes and, as such, were removed from the coding frame or subsumed within other sub-themes. The coding system was then applied manually by the researcher rather than through a computer programme such as NVivo.

Use of computer assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDA) tools has been the subject of intense debate, with proponents (e.g. Morrison and Moir, 1998) avowing that such programmes allow for fast, simple, transparent analysis of (often lengthy and complex) qualitative data sets. While those advocates of manual coding of qualitative data transcripts (e.g. Seidel, 1991) argue that use of a computer programme risks turning the analysis of qualitative data into a quantitative process, and that it distances the researcher from the data. Criticisms of the use of CAQDA tools often revolve around the argument that such tools result in the quantification of qualitative data, producing a 'frequency count' of key terms rather than an in depth analysis of meaning (Seidel, 1991). Such criticisms have been countered however by the argument that whether adopting computer-assisted or manual analysis, the quality of the analysis ultimately lies with the researcher and their decisions in relation to how to interpret the data/apply the coding (Bringer *et al.* 2004). Although they offer the potential to save time in the coding of transcripts, CAQDA tools can be time consuming to master (Basit, 2003) and may result in lower quality coding of unstructured data where the researcher is not sufficiently competent with the application of the technology.

Despite the controversy surrounding the pros and cons of manual versus computer assisted analysis due the method of data collection involved/used/required the decision was made to manually code the data. Ultimately, the analysis of qualitative data is a "dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising" (Basit, 2003; p.143) that requires the researcher to apply their own knowledge of the discipline and creative approach to interpret the data before them (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). As such, the decision as to how best one might embark upon the analysis – whether manually or through one of the CAQDA tools available - must be a decision made by the researcher on the basis of their perception of how best to handle the data in question.

In the current study the researcher conducted all 37 one-to-one and focus group interviews to ensure a consistent approach, all of which were digitally recorded to ensure all points raised were accounted for. Following data collection, each of the digitally recorded one-to-one and focus group interviews were then transcribed *verbatim* by the researcher, with the coding of transcripts commencing at the point of transcription. Transcription of all the data by the

researcher enabled them to "communicate and connect with the data to facilitate the comprehension of the emerging phenomena" (Basit, 2003; p. 152), and as such the resulting themes transpired throughout the transcription process. Moreover, manual coding of the transcripts alongside the digital recordings also facilitate non-verbal information such as the tone of voice used when participants expressed thoughts and views when evaluating the interview data against the coding themes.

3.3.3 The Final Coding Frame

Final coding frame amendments resulted in the identification of seven key themes and 14 subthemes (see Table 3.2) which were then mapped on to the headline themes.

Table 3.2. *Final Coding Framework*

	HEADLINE THEME	SUB-THEMES
1.	Investment in Staff	Access to Training and Development Opportunities
		Non-Financial Rewards
		Career Progression Opportunities
		Feedback and Praise
2.	Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment	Peer/Social Comparison
3.	Job Demands/Workload	Balance between Work and Home Life
		Flexibility and Choice
		Expectations
		Time Pressure
4.	Quality of Peer Relationships	Camaraderie
5.	Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff	Involvement and Engagement
		Quality of Relationship between Manager / Supervisor and Employee
6.	Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	Social Value from doing One's Job
7.	Perceived Organisational Support	Perceived Organisational Support

3.3.4 Definition of Identified Themes

Arising from the data, the following working definitions were developed for the identified themes:

Investment in Staff

This theme relates to employee perceptions of the nature and extent to which managers (and essentially 'the organisation') recognise their Contribution to the organisation. Essentially, it is associated with the presence of normative feedback on performance and non-financial reward - it embodies the notion of respect, justice and fairness. The theme is characterised by four constituent facets:

R1 = Access to Training and Development Opportunities

The organisation invests in its employees in a way that is meaningful to and valued by employees, for example, training and personal development opportunities.

R2 = Non-Financial Rewards

These rewards might take the form of employee social events, or items that are gifted to the employee, potentially extending to access to desirable facilities or features of the working environment.

R3 = Career Progression Opportunities

The extent to an employer/managers prioritise/provide access (or serve as a barrier) to staff personal development and progression, including potential opportunities for promotion. For example, the extent to which the organisation works with employees to manage their career paths at a level and pace with which the employee is in agreement and ensures that employees have access to the support and resources necessary to achieve this progression. Similarly, the extent to which employees feel confident that the organisation has their (employees) future prospects in mind.

R4 = Feedback and Praise

The extent to which the organisation and its managers provide feedback to employees on their performance, in particular, the extent to which praise or other positive feedback is provided in instances where employees believe it is due.

Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment

Theme relates to employee perception that they are treated in the same as their colleagues and in a 'just' way. It is a belief by employees that the same opportunities are open to them as to others of similar standing in the organisation, or relative to the employee's perceived effort.

T1 = Peer/Social Comparison

Employees are treated the same as their peers – where other employees are not getting more/greater reward/opportunity. This may be in terms of their working conditions, flexibility, recognition and/or pay and benefits. This theme is defined by Centers and Begental (1966) as an extrinsic factor that relates to the social needs of the employee.

T5 = Fairness of Opportunity

Employees feel that fair and equal opportunity is open to all.

Job Demands/Workload

Theme relates to the employees' perception that they are able to balance work and home life in terms of the length of working day, choice around hours worked and location and the expectations the organisation has of the employee relative to what the employee perceives as reasonable.

J1 = Balance between Work and Home Life

Employee has sufficient Balance between Work and Home Life in relation to hours worked, shift patterns and travel time.

J2 = Flexibility and Choice

The degree to which an employee feels they have autonomy over when (working hours, start and finish times), where (location) and how they do their job.

J3 = Expectations

Employee perceptions of organisational expectations on them in relation to hours worked and performance standards. The degree to which employees feel able to discuss organisational expectations with their line manager to establish fair and appropriate shared expectations.

J4 = Time Pressure

Employee perceptions of time pressure to get the job done. The degree to which employees feel stress as a result of perceived time pressure and whether this is ongoing, or sporadic.

Quality of Peer Relationships

Theme relates to team relationships, social inclusion or exclusion, employee sense of 'belonging'.

S1 = Camaraderie

Employees feel they have good working relationships, friendship and support from their team mates and are able to engage in 'banter' with their team mates whilst they work.

Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff

Theme relates to the employee's perception that they are appropriately communicated with, listened to and the level of engagement they feel they have in organisational decision making processes.

C2 = Involvement and Engagement

Employees feel that they are actively encouraged to participate in important decisions and aspects of working life and organisational change. Employee perception that they are consulted by the organisation about changes within the work place and that their suggestions are heard and considered by the organisation.

C3 = Employee Relationship with their Manager/Supervisor

Relates to the quality of the relationship and communication between the employee and their immediate manager. Positive leader-subordinate relationships occur where an employee is able to communicate openly with their manager without fear of repercussion.

Intrinsic Job satisfaction

Theme relates to the level of pride the employee feels in their own personal contribution to the product or service they provide, as well as any frustrations felt with the organisation when delivering this.

I2 = Social Value from doing One's Job

Employee experiences a sense of pride in the job they do due to the outcomes/impact their work has on others.

Perceived Organisational Support

Theme relates to the level of support the organisation offers, particularly when the employee is experiencing difficulty in their life.

Or1 = Employee Perceptions of Support from the Organisation

Employees feel confident that the organisation will support them at difficult and challenging times. Employees trust the organisation to appropriately support them when required.

3.3.4.1 Coding of Transcripts

The agreed coding frame was applied to 36 of the 37 transcripts (one incomplete transcript was excluded due to the fact the respondent had been called away part way through the discussion).

The categorisation depicted in Appendix E provides a summary break down of the themes referenced/discussed in each of the focus groups/one-to-one interviews. Table 3.3 (below) presents the number and percentage of the total sessions carried out, and of the focus groups/one-to-one interviews in which each of the identified themes were identified. From this it can be seen that there was a high degree of commonality with respect to the themes articulated across different groups with the themes identified being discussed in between 39% and 100% of focus groups/one-to-one interviews. Twelve of the 15 themes were raised in more than 50% of discussions, indicating a good degree of commonality in the aspects of QoWL important to employees.

3.3.4.2 Reliability of Coding

A degree of subjectivity can reasonably be expected in such analysis, especially in light of the fact that discussions often morph from one topic to another in the natural flow of conversation and in some cases discussion points cross over into more than one theme. In order to control for this and any potential errors on the part of the researcher (particularly in this instance where such a large number of discussions were recorded), a sample of the transcripts (N=8) were cross checked by the researcher's supervisor to assess the reliability of coding. Differences in the

coding were tested for concordance using Cohen's Kappa statistic (1988). This revealed levels agreement of between 80% - 90% across the sample of transcripts. This increased the level of confidence in the original coding and also provided an opportunity to discuss any discrepancies.

One acknowledged caveat to the above however, is that engaging a close colleague to conduct coder reliability may inflate the degree of agreement, due to proximity effects. For this reason, authors such as Lorr advocate the engagement of an individual unconnected with the study (see Lorr, 1983). However, in this instance the researcher's supervisor was considered appropriate because they had not been involved in the data collection or initial transcription process but had relevant academic knowledge and experience in the subject area/research topic.

Table 3.3. *Total Number and Percentage of Occurrences of Themes across the Focus Groups and One-to-one Interviews*

Theme	Sub-theme	No. of groups in which theme discussed	Total groups (%) in which theme discussed
Investment in Staff	R1 – Access to Training and Development Opportunities	25	69
	R2 – Non-Financial Rewards	30	83
	R3 – Career Progression Opportunities	19	53
	R4 – Feedback and Praise	23	64
Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment	T1 – Peer/Social Comparison	24	67
Job Demands/Workload	J1 – Balance Between Work and Home Life	36	100
	J2 – Flexibility and Choice	32	89
	J3 – Expectations	23	64
	J4 – Time Pressure	21	58
Quality of Peer Relationships	S1 – Camaraderie	35	97
Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff	C2 – Involvement and Engagement	27	75
	C3 – Quality of the Relationship Between Manager/Supervisor and Employee	18	50
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	I2 – Social Value from doing One's Job	18	50
Perceived Organisational Support	Or1 – Perceived Organisational Support	29	81

3.4 Discussion and Interpretation of Data Referenced to Identified Themes

The discussion and interpretation of results that follows focusses on the qualitative exploration of themes related to the reduced constructs listed above. This discussion sets out to articulate the basis for the identified themes by illustrating their constituent facets via participant accounts. Within each section the findings are discussed with reference to published findings. In regard to any emigrant themes, there were few surprises, in so far as none represented previously unidentified constructs within the management and organisational literatures. This is somewhat unsurprising, in view of the extensive amount of research in this area. However, given that the primary aim of the research was to achieve a sharper focus on high salience components this was not considered unduly problematic. It did however raise the question over whether the identified themes were representative of the most salient variables, or simply reflected a set of salient variables. Ultimately, this could be conclusively resolved on the basis of the available data. However, it would perhaps seem reasonable to conclude that the issues discussed were likely to have been of high salience/the most cognitively available, as well as being meaningful to the participants involved.

3.4.1 Investment in Staff

The headline theme Investment in Staff relates to a range of variables concerned with employee perceptions of the extent to which their managers and the organisation more widely invests in them and recognises the effort they put in. From the outset it is important to keep in mind that the data obtained relates to respondents' perceptions of the degree to which the organisation invests in them, rather than the actual level of investment experienced by respondents. To some degree such perceptions presented here were impressionistic and drew upon references beyond personal experience, i.e. in some cases respondents reported that they had received recognition for their effort, while they also implied that this was the experience of others:

"You can make money anywhere, but to find somewhere you can make money and be recognised for what you're doing is just a massive bonus" (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Other respondents reported having had less positive experiences however:

"You get no feedback on your performance so it is hard to guide your own staff when you've never been talked through it" (Male, Mine Supervisor, Mining Company).

For example, citations of instances where others had not received sufficient/appropriate recognition or investment appeared to have high salience/high amplitude, particularly where this reinforced suspicions of under-investment by the employer:

"A simple 'thank you' would go a long way, but you don't get it. You are just expected to work long hours, without the equipment you need to actually do the job. But you are stuck because the kids suffer if you don't do it – they have you over a barrel" (Female, Mixed Group, Teacher).

Four sub-themes comprise the theme *Investment in Staff*; Access to Training and Development Opportunities; Non-Financial Rewards; Career Progression Opportunities; Feedback and Praise.

3.4.1.1 Access to Training and Development Opportunities

Where the organisation invests in its employees in a way that is meaningful to and valued by employees, for example, opportunities for training and personal development.

In the current study, respondents widely expressed the view that the availably and quality of training is an important influence on perceptions of how much an organisation values its employees. One Mine Shift Manager commented that training was not always available:

"When I swapped…from er… survey into production I spent a short period of time training up through and then I was like my colleague is now, like an acting shift manager, and basically then you just got on with running your shift" (Male, Mining Company).

Furthermore, it is important that the training offered is relevant to and valued by the individual in the context of their professional and/or personal development, as demonstrated by one Paramedic who commented that:

"We get sent on ethics training courses through work, but I have to pay for my own development in skills more closely related to doing the job in the field – the balance is all wrong" (Female, Paramedic).

In addition, respondents were generally of the view that training needs to be presented in an engaging and meaningful way with opportunity for asking questions, discussion and clarifying

the training points. This point was particularly salient in the group of respondents in consultant roles who commented positively on the fact that their initial six-week training package was delivered by one of the company Managing Directors. Respondents felt that this demonstrated a clear commitment to, and value of them as new members of staff; as demonstrated by one respondent comment that:

"They've recently come out with a lot of the sort of training classes to track people in a better way than has been done before in the past, so they obviously invested a lot of time into that so that's the kind of thing that ... I think that's quite beneficial, especially in the early stages and even when people have been here for a couple of years...they've still got certain classes on to help either refresh or carry on that kind of personal development" (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

This was in marked contrast to perspectives on E-Learning, which appeared to be universally disliked. Negative connotations here were seemingly bound up with, if not soured by, the perception that the format represented a low cost, low (managerial) commitment solution. In this respect, e-learning, it seems, can play a role in transmitting an implicit message regarding organisational/managerial commitment to investment in it. It also tended to be interpreted as conveying a message of tokenism a "tick box" exercise with little or no concern for the effectiveness of the actual training, rather than a strong commitment to staff development. Additionally, the fact that e-learning effectively precluded broader interaction within the training process and provided no opportunity for engagement or asking questions and as a result of being presented online did not fit well with the different learning styles or preferences. As a result the act of completing an online training course was viewed by the Fire Fighters as a waste of their time because *"you can't ask questions and most are rubbish anyway".* This is supported by research by Choo and Bowley (2007) that showed that good quality training, delivered by experienced and knowledgeable trainers can have a positive effect on job satisfaction. However, there are those who advocate the use of online training and assessment tools as a means of empowering employees and enabling continuous learning (e.g. Hall and Mirvis, 1995). Yet this was not the case in the current study, rather that this type of training option sends an implicit message to employees that training is not necessarily a high priority for the employer. That this was ascribed as lower capital by the respondents.

When discussing retained Fire Fighters (i.e. those who have a full time job and carry out their Fire Service role around this), one respondent from the Fire and Rescue Service commented that in relation to training and investment in staff *"there's a lack of time so it's really hard to get the same quality training and the instructors that deal with the retained staff must be under such*

pressure to deliver the quality they have to in such a short space of time" (Male, Retained Fire Fighter, Fire Service). Thus, highlighting the belief that the organisation doesn't necessarily prioritise staff training by not providing them with sufficient time to complete courses so that they can then feel competent in using the skills obtained.

Those in paramedic and technician roles expressed the view that training needs to be perceived as relevant to the employee and that failing to provide relevant training results in the general sentiment that the organisation does not fully understand the roles of its employees. This, in turn, could lead to the perception by employees that the organisation does not value them enough to find out what they do. There were a number of comments suggesting that management should go out and experience working on the front line so they could fully understand and appreciate what is involved on a daily basis:

"The company doesn't listen to us, they don't understand what it is we do and yet they make all the decisions. If they had to do our job they would have more understanding of what would be helpful" (Male, Paramedic);

"Higher managers have never had to do this job, they should have to come out and see what it is all about, then they would get it. Giving us endless training on diversity and ethics is not helpful when what we need is practical training relevant to the job" (Male, Paramedic).

General sentiments from the paramedics and technicians interviewed reflected a view that few training and mentoring opportunities are offered within the organisation and that this negatively impacts how people work. When training is offered it was claimed to have the *"wrong focus"* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service) as exemplified by one respondent who had been sent on a one-day course on diversity, which included a ten minute update at the end of the day on major changes to resuscitation procedure. This respondent went on to comment that clinical training must be done individually and funded by yourself, despite the fact it is essential in being able to do the job to the highest standard. This view was eloquently demonstrated by another respondent who commented that mandatory training *"does not seem to be focussed in the right direction"* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service) and must be done in your own time and be self-funded. This approach to training appears to have resulted in transparent cynicism on the part of the employees with regards to the believed sincerity of employer claims that they are investing in their staff. The belief that employers provide training 'on the cheap' seems to be communicating the message that management lack genuine commitment to employee advancement and up skilling.

Overall, respondents were keen to receive training. What is clear from the discussions relating to this topic is that not just any training will do. Employees want to feel that the training they receive is relevant in terms of content, that it is well presented with the opportunity to engage and interact throughout, with sufficient time to complete the training so that those in receipt of it feel confident in being able to use the skills gained, i.e. that it contributes to their skill set and personal development and is relevant to them, rather than simply suiting the needs of the organisation. Whilst it also appears that no research has exclusively examined the relationship between access to training and investment in staff. In light of the comments made in the course of the interviews this is clearly an important aspect of QoWL. Perhaps it relates to the wider concept of non-financial reward, especially in light of the comments that training and investment in staff must be relevant and meaningful to the employee and not just about driving forward a wider company agenda.

Opportunities for training and development have been widely linked to job satisfaction (Owens, 2006), performance (Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999; Wayne *et al.* 2002) and intention to quit (Owens, 2006; Pugh, 1984; Thomas *et al.* 2000), suggesting that it can have a detrimental effect on employee engagement if neglected. The focus on this aspect of QoWL across the respondent groups interviewed in this study would support the importance of this aspect of working life.

3.4.1.2 Non-Financial Rewards

These rewards might take the form of employee social events, or items that are gifted to the employee, potentially extending to access to desirable facilities or features of the working environment.

In the current study, the predominant sentiment made related to the perception that if an organisation chooses to offer employees non-financial rewards, that they should be meaningful to the individuals concerned. Not providing any non-financial rewards can in fact increase employee dissatisfaction as they may feel that the organisation does not understand and value them as an individual. This sentiment was typified by a within consultant the mixed focus group who explained that they particularly appreciated their organisation's method of reward through allowing employees to choose what (reward(s)) they would like to receive from an extensive list of options.

By far the most satisfied group in respect of any non-financial rewards were the trainee consultants and consultants. Without fail, every group talked about the monthly social events

held to reward success and trips and all expenses paid for the top performers within their organisation. The following comments highlight this further:

"It's the incentives they offer...each quarter they try and do something to make people, you know, hit their goal" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"There's like after end of quarter there's always like a company do, like we got one on Friday. Erm, this one's the end of financial year, so it's staying over and its dinner and that, it's always incentives and rewards for what you're doing" (Female, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"You can make money anywhere, but to find somewhere you can make money and be recognised for what you're doing is just a massive bonus" (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

It would seem that in the group of trainee consultants and consultants the social rewards not only imbue a sense of reward and value, but the type of events used to reward may also contribute to social cohesion within the organisation, but only for the 'winners'. Whereas those who do not meet their performance objectives are excluded, being more likely to foster social marginalisation. Indeed some of the comments made by a number of the respondents about those who failed to meet their targets consistently was that they would not stay with the company long. It is also worth commenting here that it may be much easier to tailor rewards for individuals in smaller organisations as opposed to larger organisations with significantly more staff working across larger areas within more diverse roles.

In the mixed group one participant was particularly pleased with the fact that she was able to take language courses through her place of work at no charge and saw this as a good non-financial reward for her work there. This generated further discussion and the general consensus within this group was that rewards must be meaningful to the individual in order to be considered as a reward:

"I can choose if I want healthcare, or shopping vouchers – and where the vouchers are for – I can decide how much pension I contribute, and if I want gym membership, it is my choice how I structure my package and how I choose to have any additional performance rewards come to me" (Female, Consultant, mixed group).

One Mine Supervisor felt that being fair in the rewards offered to employees was important, commenting that:

"All you can do is try to be fair, give everybody the same starting point and then go from there and the people that work for you, you can reward them and the people that don't want to work for you then you don't reward them" (Male, Mining Company).

In light of these findings it would be valuable to better understand what types of non-financial reward are generally perceived to be of high and low value to employees so that organisations might use this information to decide how they target their reward systems. This conclusion is supported by the findings of Eisenberger *et al.* (1997) and Shore and Shore (1995).

Research by Cherrington *et al.* (1971) found that those employees who were rewarded reported higher levels of job satisfaction than those who were not and Rusbult and Farrell (1983) explored the impact of rewards, costs and availability of alternative employment on employee intention to quit and found that a fine balance between the three factors exists when it comes to employee intention to quit. The authors state that intention to quit is related to the perceived balance of reward to cost and the availability of suitable alternative employment. They do not, however, specify which rewards are considered more or less 'valuable' by employees. Sims and Szilagyi (1975) explored reward behaviour on hospital workers across a range of job roles. They found that perceptions of positive leader reward behaviours led to higher employee satisfaction and a strong sense of employee satisfaction with their leader. However, punitive reward behaviour did not yield a significant outcome, although results did indicate that such leadership behaviours were, to some degree, dissatisfying.

It should be noted here that while a large proportion of the extant literature explores the impact of financial reward on aspects of employees QoWL related outcomes (e.g. Baker *et al.* 1988; Jenkins and Gupta, 1982; Kohn, 1993; Fisher *et al.* 1992) financial reward was actually discussed very little throughout the focus groups and one-to-one discussions. Therefore, the distinction drawn with respect to reward systems being *non-financial* in nature appears to be an important one in this instance.

3.4.1.3 Career Progression Opportunities

The extent to which employers/managers prioritise and/or provide access (or serve as a barrier) to staff personal development and progression, including potential opportunities for promotion. For example, the extent to which the organisation works with employees to manage career paths at a level and pace that the employee is in agreement with, as well as ensuring that

employees have access to appropriate support and/or the resources needed to achieve progression. Similarly, this also includes the extent to which employees feel confident that the organisation has their (employees) future prospects in mind.

Career progression emerged as a common theme across all focus group and one-to-one discussions, with perceptions relating to the clarity of career paths and the degree to which organisations facilitate or impede progression was central to these discussions. Comments made by a number of the Paramedics, Technicians and Fire Fighters, related to the general feeling that progression is more about passing exams than actual competence in their respective roles. One Paramedic suggested that a good way to manage career progression might be to have a system whereby employees have to get recommendations from the people they have worked with and their line manager when they want to move to the next level. The idea being that any recommended is based on your competence in the field rather than ability to pass exams.

Clarity and visibility of career progression opportunities also seems to be an important factor. Respondent comments suggested that they want to know about any potential opportunities and how they might go about achieving them. Several respondents suggested that a lack of clear focus in this area is a contributing factor to dissatisfaction at work and may subsequently lead to them seeking employment elsewhere:

"I didn't feel there was anywhere to go in my previous role, it was extremely stressful, long hours and I could not see how I could progress, so I decided to leave" (Female, Supply Teacher, mixed group).

Elements of autonomy were also evident, particularly with regard to how one can manage their own career here too. A large proportion of the trainee consultants and consultants felt they had a high degree of autonomy and control over their career progression opportunities. This simplicity and clarity in relation to career progression seemed to be a strong motivating factor for the majority of participants within this group and illustrated by the comment that *"here it's if you're good at what you do and you're doing it...then you'll get to the next level and that's it"* (Male, Recruitment Consultant, recruitment Consultancy). When considered in relation to the existing literature, employee perceptions of their career prospects have been shown to have an impact on various aspects of working life. For instance, self-perceived advancement prospects were found to have a positive effect on relationship dimensions of job performance and job satisfaction in research conducted by Igbaria and Greenhaus (1992) in relation to Management Information Systems (MIS) managers and professionals. It also had a positive effect on career satisfaction and organisational commitment, although the strength of this effect was greater in the case of

professionals as opposed managers, and is supported by previous research (see for example, Couger, 1988; Lucas, 1989).

Clarity on what needs to be achieved to progress also came through as an important factor, with the trainee consultants and consultants interviewed expressing this through comments that the clear career path made people *"motivated to hit targets and move up the career ladder – it is clear what you need to do to achieve it"* (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy). This need for clarity was echoed by one of the paramedics who stated that they felt people need *"clear, easy career progression for people based on experience and recommendation rather than exams"* (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service). Respondents from all organisations expressed the perception that people do leave organisations as a direct result of a lack of career progression opportunities, thus implying that this does have an impact on QoWL. This is further supported by other research. Compton (1987) and Woodruff (1980) highlighted that a lack of career progression opportunities can lead to job dissatisfaction; while Lang (1985) showed that it can also lead to alienation as a result of the frustration at not progressing as one would like to through an organisation.

The existing literature in relation to career progression opportunities appears to support the comments of respondents from the focus group and one-to-one interviews reported here. For example, Rice *et al.* (1989) explored the impact of job progression expectations in relation to job satisfaction and found that not getting anticipated promotion opportunities can have a negative impact on the level of job satisfaction. This would support the premise that it is not about the availability of progression opportunities *per se*, but more to do with individual employee aspirations being met. This might also reflect parallels with employee perceptions relating to non-financial rewards; being less about the reward (or in relation to this subtheme, career opportunity) and more about the *meaningfulness* of reward (or career progression opportunity) to the individual in question. Career satisfaction of employees has previously been predicted by supervisor perceptions of employee career advancement prospects for Management Information Systems managers and professionals and although not entirely predictive, employees whose supervisors felt they had extensive career advancement prospects were found to be more committed to the organisation than those with limited prospects (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992). Furthermore, employees with greater experience and tenure experienced more limited career advancement opportunities than younger employees, although this was less so in the MIS managers group than the MIS professionals (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992). However, regardless of career advancement prospects, job and career satisfaction were directly affected by job performance, which the authors suggested might be due to intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction gained through doing a good job. This would suggest that while career progression

opportunities are important, they are not necessarily the *most* important determining factor in relation to QoWL, although it must be acknowledged that this research relates to a specific employee group and cannot necessarily be generalised to all/the majority of employees. In light of the importance placed on career progression opportunities in the focus group and one-to-one interviews conducted here however, it does appear that it is an aspect of QoWL that has been wrongfully neglected in the research to date and therefore warrants further investigation.

3.4.1.4 Feedback and Praise

The extent to which the organisation and its managers provide feedback to employees on their performance, particularly, the extent to which praise or other positive feedback is provided in instances where it is believed (by employees) to be due.

Feedback and praise can operate at the individual (individual normative feedback) or group level (social normative feedback) (see, for example, Schultz, 1999).

In the current study, perceptions relating to feedback appear to relate to more than what you get (or not) from your manager, it also relates to the feedback one might get from colleagues, or from customers, for those in customer-facing roles. Many of the comments relating to feedback and praise from the focus groups were related to negative feedback, or a total lack of feedback altogether. This is exemplified by comments like the following from a supervisor; *"you get no feedback on your performance so it is hard to guide your own staff when you've never been talked through it"* (Male, Mine Supervisor, Mining Company) and other typical comments like this one from an office Support Staff who when asked what one single thing would improve QoWL responded, without hesitation *"...just to be appreciated more, by other people, not so much by management, but by other people"* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company). A further, fairly typical response was succinctly put by a front line production worker who commented that *"you only get feedback when things are bad – you don't hear when things are good"* (Male, Mine Operative, Mining Company). So it would seem that while feedback, and more specifically praise, can have a positive impact in terms of staff motivation, the nature of the sentiment expressed is transparently key, i.e. feedback can have both positive and negative effects on individuals and/or groups and must be handled with care when 'constructive' in nature.

The transcripts also revealed references to issues of wider social recognition. This public/external perception was particularly apparent between the Fire Service and the paramedics. For example, one group of paramedic respondents cited a recent high profile

(media) incident where an injured woman, being passed from a cruise ship to a rescue boat was allegedly dropped into freezing sea water by the paramedics transferring her over. This raised a number of comments from paramedics that they often feel like the forgotten element while the press glorify the role of Fire Fighters in rescue situations. A typical example of such a comment came from a paramedic speaking about the incident; *"[you] don't get much positive feedback in the Service or in the press"* (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Krause (2005) highlights the key role of feedback in the context of staff engagement; that this is down to leadership practices and its impact on organisational culture. Although there is little in the way of direct research exploring feedback and QoWL, feedback and praise has been linked to employee engagement, a lack of which has been associated with high turnover, high sickness absence and increased employee stress (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Flade's (2003) report of findings from the Gallup Organisation's Employee Engagement Index survey data collected in the UK in 2001 found that 61% of UK employees were not engaged at work and a further 20% were actively disengaged, which in the light of comments from the engaged respondents in the current study could indicate that a large proportion of the UK workforce may not be getting the feedback and praise essential to ensuring they are engaged with their organisation. Other theories relating to employee engagement also make reference to feedback as an integral part of the process. Csikszentmihalyi's (1990; 1996) Flow-Engagement Approach advocates the use of direct and immediate feedback. Whilst more recently Lunt *et al.* (2007) highlight that feedback may be a means to reduce workplace stress.

Overall, taking the comments gathered in the course of the one-to-one and focus group interviews alongside the supporting literature would suggest that feedback and praise are key components towards ensuring that employees experience a positive QoWL and feel engaged in and motivated by their work.

3.4.2 Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment

The theme Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment relates to employees perceiving that the way they in which they are treated is in line with that of their colleagues and is 'just'. This theme encompasses employees' beliefs that the same opportunities are open to them as to others of similar standing in the organisation, or relative to the employee's perceived effort. The perceptions reflected in this theme are subjective reflections from respondents regarding how they rate their own treatment compared with those they work with, as well as the degree to which they consider their treatment to be equitable to that of their peers. Thus, it is not about the organisation treating them fairly *per se*, rather an assessment by the employee as to whether

what they get is the same as those they consider as comparators to them. A specific comment made across two of the organisations involved in this study was that it is about *"if your face fits"*. The implication being that if it does, an employee is treated preferentially to those whose faces do not *"fit"*.

In essence, this theme represents, to a certain degree, an alternate facet of the previous theme Investment in Staff, which highlighted the importance of opportunity for development, investment, career progression and rewards. This theme might offer the perspective that the investment aspects of working life may be more salient compared to what colleagues may or may not be perceived to be getting in relation to the self, as exemplified by the comment:

"I know the money thing sounds bad but erm...it's nice when management come and say you've done a good job and that, but when you see somebody else get a pay rise ahead of you and not just the amount of money, the fact that it's recognition of your achievement I think..." (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company).

3.4.2.1 Peer/Social Comparison

Where employees feel that they are being treated the same as their peers and that other employees are not getting more/greater reward and/or opportunities. This may be in terms of the working conditions, flexibility, recognition or pay and benefits. This theme is defined by Centers and Begental (1966) as an extrinsic factor that relates to social needs.

Peer/social comparison appears to be a significant contributing factor in an employees' level of satisfaction at work and as a result, their QoWL more generally. Respondents interviewed across all of the participant organisations cited instances where employees felt that favouritism or positive discrimination had taken place. In the case of the Fire Service it was interesting to hear the perceptions of the retained Fire Fighters who felt they did not get the level of training and support that the full time Fire Fighters got in contrast with the perceptions of the full time Fire Fighters who felt the retained Fire Fighters did not have to meet such rigorous standards to be accepted into the Service:

"We [full time firefighters] *have to go through a tough selection and training process that the part-timers don't have to do. They can get a full time position after doing the retained role for a while and get in without the same selection process we had to do"* (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service).

As previously stated, in other interviews, across more than one organisation, the term *"if your face fits"* was used in relation to a sentiment that some people are perceived to be treated preferentially. For the trainee consultants and consultants the *"if your face fits"* (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy) comment seemed to relate to being less closely managed in terms of breaks and working hours. For the Miners and support staff, the term seems to relate more to getting the resources you ask for as exemplified by the comment from one member of support staff that *"Basically, if your face fits you know... any favour you ask, you get"* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company).

There was a strong sense of unfairness amongst full time Fire Fighters that retained Fire Fighters have been taken on without having to go through the same selection procedures as them. They expressed the view that the retained Fire Fighters are often converted to full time with less rigorous procedures. The retained Fire Fighters however, perceived that they are not treated equally, with the full time Fire Fighters despite being expected to do the same job when an emergency call comes in *"you're still treated not as well as the whole time Fire Fighters, but yet you do more hours. Yeah, you might not be in the station the whole time, it's a very sort of weird situation, and I don't know how you would change it. I can imagine there's probably a fair few sort of, grievances almost coming through and people talking about it"* (Male, Retained Fire Fighter, Fire Service). There was also the perception amongst Fire Fighters and Support Staff that some employees have more opportunities open to them than others and that there is a differential in pay and treatment between uniform and non-uniform staff. This point is demonstrated by the following comment from a participant that *"we have so much more time [for the full time Fire Fighters]; I can give them a lot more quality. Whereas the retained personnel, because they might be in a full time job they say they don't get the equipment and don't have time to train. When we go round and do the fitness assessments it's very sort of, short and to the point, just the fitness assessment"* (Female, Support Staff, Fire Service).

Participants seemed to compare themselves with their colleagues in many areas of working life including pay and financial reward. Pay in itself was not highly rated as a factor that influenced QoWL except when it was a point of comparison. When asked what would improve their QoWL, one respondent commented *"I know the money thing sounds bad but erm...it's nice when management come and say you've done a good job and that, but when you see somebody else get a pay rise ahead of you and not just the amount of money, the fact that it's recognition of your achievement I think..."* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company). A further comment from one of the Miners interviewed reflected what many had mentioned in relation to the mine bonus system, in that "the disparity with the bonuses can drive a wedge between people". Such comments would suggest that this type of peer comparison can impact upon camaraderie and

have a negative impact on team dynamics – another factor (one that will be explored later) that also seemed to strongly influence QoWL according to the respondents' comments.

When considered in relation to the existing literature, fairness within an organisation can be thought to relate broadly to two types of 'justice'; Procedural Justice – that which relates to the formal systems and processes within an organisation and how these are applied and Interactional Justice – the interpersonal treatment experienced during application of processes within the organisation (Bies and Moag, 1986). The two types of 'justice' are often viewed as interdependent (Bies and Moag, 1986; Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997). Employee perceptions of interactional justice have been found to be associated with outcomes connected to supervisor behaviours (Masterson and Taylor, 1996), as well as with employee citizenship behaviours and commitment to their supervisor (Malatesta and Byrne, 1997). Perceptions of Procedural Justice have been associated with intention to quit (Masterson and Taylor, 1996) and organisational commitment (Malatesta and Byearsne, 1997). Folger and Cropanzano (1998) relate these outcomes to perceptions of accountability – if an employee perceives an injustice to have occurred they will seek to find those accountable for it. Therefore (in line with the perceptions of justice described above), injustices relating to procedures are typically attributed as being the fault of the organisation, whilst those relating to how procedures are carried out are likely be attributed to the supervisor.

Peer relationships have also been shown to provide a number of "developmental supports for personal and professional growth at each career stage" (Kram and Isabella 1985; p.116) in research that examined the role of peer relationships in career progression and whilst it is clear that peer relationships can have a very positive role in employees' QoWL, according to the data arising from this study when employees feel they are being treated unfairly compared to their colleagues this has the potential to erode QoWL.

Theories of social comparison are widely attributed to Festinger (1954, cited Taylor and Lobel, 1989), whose original conceptualisation was broad in scope and encompassed the implicit and explicit evaluation of the self against others. Since Festinger's (1954) original conceptualisation there have been many more interpretations regarding exactly what people compare and with whom. Taylor and Lobel (1989) cite a number of studies that explore different aspects of social comparison – Festinger (1954) proposed that people tend to compare themselves with those they consider to be of a similar standing in whatever it is they wish to compare to provide an accurate point of comparison, or with someone of a slightly higher standing – referred to as upward comparisons.

Suls *et al.* (2002) cite the work of Wills (1983) who explored the nature of downward comparison, concluding that individuals who feel in some way threatened will compare themselves with those they consider to be worse off, thus creating a sense of subjective well-being. They go on to assert that "the effects of social comparison on self-evaluations are not intrinsically linked to the direction of the comparison. Comparison can produce positive and negative contrastive and assimilative effects, which have implications for any setting where relative standing is salient" (Suls *et al.* (2002), p162). Thus, it follows that if employees are comparing themselves to others they consider to be of a similar standing work wise, and perceive that those with whom they compare themselves are getting more or better than they, it will ultimately result in dissatisfaction and potentially discord, thus negatively impacting on QoWL. Indeed, the comments made by respondents in relation to this theme would certainly indicate that to be the case. In conclusion, analysis of the information relating to social/peer comparison would suggest that managers and organisations need to ensure that employees perceive themselves to be treated fairly compared to those of the same or similar standing in order to avoid employee dissatisfaction.

3.4.3 Job Demands/Workload

The headline theme *Job Demands/Workload* relates to the employees' perception that they are able to balance work and home life in terms of the length of working day, choice around hours worked and location and the expectations the organisation has of the employee relative to what the employee perceives as being reasonable. This theme reflects respondent perceptions around work demands in relation to the degree to which the working day impacts upon their home life and the time they have outside of work to engage in leisure activities, as well as household activities, be that in terms of actual hours worked, or commute times in addition to the working day:

"I don't necessarily mind working the hours that I work, but I wish the day was longer so that I could do other things as well" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Related to this were comments around perceptions of autonomy and control of workload, as well as decision making and flexibility in relation to how one organises their working day and exercises autonomy in carrying out the job. Citations of instances where decision making is inhibited by organisational rules/processes indicate that a lack of control can result in frustration:

"I am not allowed to use some of my training when I am on scene because of management rules. I could do more, but I'm not allowed and that's frustrating" (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Alongside this were comments around the degree to which employees can vary their working hours or location to accommodate other areas of their lives, with cited instances of trying to book GP (general practitioner) appointments, or get dry cleaning done when faced with a lack of flexibility of working hours creating situations where employees are forced to take annual leave to enable them to do daily non-work related tasks:

"Monday to Friday we can't physically book [a GP appointment] because we have to be in at eight o'clock" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Associated with a lack of flexibility were respondent perceptions as to what the company expects of them and the demands of the job they do, such as performance targets to get to patients within specified time frames, regardless of location:

"In areas where there is a lot of traffic the eight minute target still applies even though we have no control over traffic. There is nothing we can do about it" (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Resourcing and time pressure was another aspect of job demand that was discussed in a number of the focus group and one-to-one interviews, with respondents indicating frustration at not being able to get through the work, or feeling pressured due to a lack of resource in conflict with high performance demands:

"You can never, ever get through it all and…that does cause you to be worrying about workloads" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service).

Four sub-themes comprise this theme: Balance between Work and Home Life; Flexibility and Choice; Expectations; Time Pressure.

3.4.3.1 Balance between Work and Home Life

Employee has sufficient Balance between Work and Home Life in relation to hours worked, shift patterns and travel time.

In the current study the balance between work and home life was central to discussions across all groups and generated the greatest comments and most discussion, by volume. Key aspects

that related to work-life balance centred around long hours, inability to plan as a result of people not knowing when they would be able to leave work at the end of the day, long commutes to and from work, which further diminished the length of time available to engage in out of work activities and remote technology, which many felt meant they were unable to 'switch off' when away from the office. There were a large number of comments relating to long working hours from the trainee consultants and consultants, exemplified by the selected quotes below:

"My life outside of work I've had to put almost on the back burner, so to speak, because we're in the office until like half six, seven o'clock and sometimes later" (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

"It's also hard to know when you are going to work till. You can't tell, so if you get a requirement to come in and you've got to stay and work hard, there's no telling. So you can't ever make long term plans" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

The majority of respondents, despite citing long hours as a negative factor in relation to their QoWL, were broadly accepting of the need to work long hours but said they would also like to have time to do things like going to the gym, pursuing hobbies and sports and spending time with family. However, most trainee and consultant respondents also commented that they could appreciate why there was the need for the long hours they work.

"I don't necessarily mind working the hours that I work, but I wish the day was longer so that I could do other things as well." (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy)

"If I have to work evenings, or come in at the weekend, then so be it. That's part of my job, that's why I earn decent money, but I like to think that I can leave my job behind when I leave here and go home to my wife and we can stick the telly on and I can maybe have a chat with her about it, but never let it affect my mood at home with her. There will be times where you are screwed, but the next day you come into the office and you know that's it's a new day and that things are going to start going your way so...Yeah, I think again, it comes back to the resilient thing and if you let your job affect your lifestyle and your happiness outside of work then yeah, maybe you're in the wrong job?" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

"I think in reality everybody always wishes they didn't have to work as many hours and all that kind of stuff, but the reality is we wouldn't be able to do our job in smaller hours" (Female, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

"When you start you need to grow a base and get everything done so you need to work the long hours for the first couple, at least six months. Do the long hours, get your base sorted, get to

understand the market, do it on the weekend it's a bit easier, you feel a bit more easier to be speaking to clients and candidates on a certain level. At night, some clients might like to be called after six, so you stay till after six to call them, but then you have to build that relationship with both your clients and your candidates then once you've got that under your belt, then you can take time out and not work weekends" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Length of commute was discussed by the trainee consultants, consultants, the Miners and administrative staff at the mine, but in quite different contexts. The majority of the trainee consultants and consultants had long commutes to and from work, so even after having completed, what was widely reported to be a ten to twelve hour day, many still had a further one to two hours to travel home (notwithstanding the same commute to work the next day). Many of the discussions focussed on how the long hours and additional time taken up by commuting prevented the respondents from doing things outside of work during the week due time constraints. The following selection of comments exemplifies the many comments made by the trainee consultants and consultants in this regard:

"I used to work five minutes away from where I live so I had time to exercise and go to the gym and spend an hour in the gym every day. Here, there is physically no time whatsoever to actually exercise and that's an important part of your life, because if you feel good inside it will come across in work lifestyle I suppose" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"You don't really have a balance. Monday to Friday it is work and then you have Saturday and Sunday off when you're tired and you don't really wanna do anything. I used to play rugby and now I literally get up at half five and leave the house to get the seven o'clock train and then get home and I don't see anyone in my house unless they happen to be up when I get in" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"It's like even when you leave it's late, you're getting a lot later when you add travel – you've got no time to do anything" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

"Even just going home and cooking a regular dinner, I haven't cooked myself a hot meal in ages ...now I literally go in have a sandwich and go to bed" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"You couldn't actually do anything until late and if you wanted to go out and have a few drinks you know you have to be in the office at like eight in the morning" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"I've got a massive commute – it takes me four hours to get to and from work. I find it impacts on my social life sometimes" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

In marked contrast, almost every employee of the mining company cited the close proximity of home to work as a significant positive contribution to their work-life balance. Notably, of the minority that were based further away from the mine they did comment that this was a negative factor in terms of balancing work and home life. For the mining company employees, shift work was commented upon in relation to work-life balance, with some respondents expressing the view that the shift system had a negative impact in that it takes a day or so after finishing a particular shift rotation to recover and this takes away some of the time out, whilst some respondents said they liked the shift pattern as they felt it gave them more time off to enjoy with their families. Shift work has long been the subject of enquiry with regard to its potential disbenefits to wellbeing with some suggesting that shift work disrupts "biological and social synchrony"(Costa and Di Milia, 2008, p.172,) as well as being a key driver in employee turnover as a result of its impact on work-life balance (Carlson *et al.* 2009). Psychological and somatic problems, anxiety, depression and substance abuse have all been associated with work-life balance discord attributed to shift work (e.g. Frone *et al.* 1993; Tiedje *et al.* 1990). Research by Bohle and Tilley (1998) found that when nurses reported high levels of time-related work-life balance difficulties they reported higher levels of physical (particularly gastrointestinal) symptoms and lower psychological wellbeing.

Furthermore, research suggests that the length and time of shift, as well as the shift pattern has an impact on risk, with risk increasing with longer shifts and on successive night shifts - although this successive risk increase does seem to occur, to a lesser degree, on successive day shifts (Folkard and Tucker, 2003). Interestingly, shift work was not raised as an issue by the Fire and Ambulance Service employees interviewed, despite being integral to their roles.

Remote access to systems afforded by communications technology (PC based; pagers; mobile phone and Blackberry etc.) was discussed in a number of the groups. Those without the opportunity to work from home via remote connections often expressed the view that such access would be a benefit. Those who used remote technology described it as both a blessing and a curse. On-line remote access was cited as an enhancement to QoWL in that it allowed people to work at home, thus removing the need for long commutes on a daily basis. However, it was also described as a "curse", due to the fact that it could mean that one could never truly get away from one's work. A number of the respondents who regularly used remote connection technology admitted to checking emails whilst on holiday and stated that they would often check emails on a Sunday afternoon so they felt prepared for work on Monday morning.

In one group of administrative support staff, remote access to email was cited as having a negative impact on their home life and leisure time. The general feeling amongst members of this group, and one mirrored by a number of the other respondents who used remote access, is characterised by the following quote*; "a few of us ended up talking about this idea that you just think, 'I'll just have a quick look and see if there's anything urgent that I need to know about before I walk in the door, to deal with' and, we were all saying that we all sleep really badly on a Sunday night. 'I think it is that your brain is almost gearing up for what you're facing in the week'"* (Female, Support Staff, Fire Service).

Some research suggests that use of mobile technology can enhance and facilitate balancing work and home life by reducing travel time (Baruch, 2000), although the picture is mixed with other studies indicating it creates more issues than it resolves (e.g. Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Shamir and Salomon, 1985) by reducing opportunities for team interaction and social support and removing the clear distinction between work time and home time that entering and leaving the office affords.

Comments relating to location and QoWL are supported by research by Hill *et al.* (1998) who explored the impact of the virtual office and teleworking (working remotely) on work-life balance, acknowledging that "there has been very little empirical research about how radically greater flexibility in the timing and location of work really influences business outcomes and work/life balance" (Hill, *et al.* 1998; p667). These authors conclude that existing research in the area is contradictory in determining if working from a virtual office has a positive or a negative impact on employee well-being and work-life-balance (also see Olson and Primps, 1984)

In their study Hill *et al.* (1998) found that respondents felt they were more productive when they could work from a virtual office due to shorter commute times and the ability to work when they were at their most productive. Respondents reported that the greater flexibility afforded them by remote working had a positive impact on their personal life. However, in relation to work-life balance, more of the respondents felt that it had a negative impact and blurred the boundary between work and home time. This finding was supported by both the quantitative and qualitative data collected in the study. Other studies (e.g. Callentine, 1995; Hill *et al.* 1998) found that teamwork could be adversely affected by remote working.

3.4.3.2 Flexibility and Choice

The degree to which an employee feels they have autonomy over when (working hours, start and finish times), where (location) and how they do their job.

The majority of respondents expressed the view that flexibility and choice at work does enhance QoWL. Flexibility over working hours dominated articulations in this area, for example, perceptions of levels of flexibility amongst the trainee consultants and consultants was a key topic of conversation, whereby these groups reported significant autonomy of structuring their day as they saw fit, so long as this met with client demand as exemplified by the following comment that *"It's pretty much you're given the tools, you're told this is one of the ways if you want to do it, this is another, but you get to choose how you go about it so everyone within this room will have a different style and a different method to the way they work"* (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy). However, this was tempered by the widely held sentiment that while they enjoyed considerable autonomy over how they approached doing their job, the office environment *"...is very controlled"* (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy), with little or no flexibility in terms of the hours they worked. This even extended to trying to fit in personal appointments during the working week with the general sentiment encapsulated well by the comment that *"It's even the simplest thing like a doctor's appointment. Monday to Friday we can't physically book because we have to be in at eight o'clock so we try to work around it"* (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy). This view was mirrored by a comment from another consultant in a different group who said that what they would like is *"to be able to work the ten hours that I want to work. Not all the time. I'm not saying that I want to work from eleven thirty in the morning to half past eight at night. I'm saying that if I've got an appointment...I had to book half a day holiday because I thought if I'm going to be out of the office in the morning I'm not going to have the time enough to do it. Whereas if I just said to him I'm going to turn up at half past nine on Tuesday, I'll work until half past seven instead"* (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

There was the general view amongst both the trainee consultant and consultant groups that flexibility could be used as a reward for good performance, as demonstrated by the comment *that "there should be some sort of flexibility, for example, come in an hour later than normal because you had a really good day, or a good week or something, so that if there's anything you need to do...and sort of spread it out between teams so that people have got that extra hour in the morning if they need to nip out and do something, or like, pop to the bank. You know, I've*

got everything like my errands, somebody else does for me because I can't physically do it" (Female, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy). This is also supported within the literature, that autonomy can have a positive impact on aspects of QoWL (e.g. Cathcart *et al.* 2004; Watson, 1995).

Many of the office staff interviewed from within the different organisations expressed strong views regarding flexible working. In some organisations there were reports of inconsistencies, with some staff having the opportunity to work flexible hours and who liked having this autonomy, whilst others did not, again this was linked to the comment that *"if your face fits"*. Unsurprisingly, this was a source of discontent and resentment, as those denied the opportunity could not appreciate the reason for this inconsistency, which seemed to cause a level of annoyance, not only with regard to not having the same level of flexibility as other members of office staff, but also in terms of feeling as though some staff were being treated differently to others, i.e. it aroused negative sentiments with respect to issues of fairness and equity.

The general sentiment in relation to flexibility amongst paramedics and technicians was that the degree of flexibility often depended upon the nature of the job. Whilst paramedics expressed that they had the (professional) autonomy to make (predominantly clinical) decisions in the field, they felt they had little input into decision making at the organisational level which, in their view, often led to decisions being made that had an adverse effect on the front line. Some respondents expressed the view that this management level decision making was leading towards an increasingly protocol driven service, more focussed on following procedure than allowing trained professionals to make autonomous decisions when faced with the typical range of situations they are regularly exposed to within the field. Power (1994) makes reference to an "audit explosion" (p.2) commenting that "audit has assumed the status of an all-purpose solution to problems of administrative control. Despite concerns about its costs, the benefits of audit are assumed by its proponents rather than proven" (p.38) and suggesting that instead of the discipline focus of current audit processes that undermine trust, the way forward is one which uses audits at a local level and in a facilitative manner.

Shift patterns were another topic of conversation that evoked quite opposite points of view amongst the Miners interviewed. Of those working shifts, there was a split in opinion between those that liked the shift pattern and those that did not. Those who did not felt it was difficult to adjust to the different shifts and that not having regular weekends to spend with their family and friends, when they are typically off work, was a negative aspect. Those who liked the shift pattern felt that it gave them greater flexibility in that they had more days off in one go, which enabled them to go out and do the things they wanted to do. They also said they liked having

week days off to run errands when town centres etc... are not as busy as the weekend. The Fire Fighters interviewed all agreed that the shift patterns were a positive thing that allowed them time with family and the ability to run errands. One Fire Fighter commented that it allowed him to take his children to school some days, which he felt was a very positive aspect of the shift pattern system.

Baltes *et al.* (1999) investigated the impact of flexible and compressed working schedules and found that the option for both improved job satisfaction ratings, but flexible working, also resulted in a decrease in absenteeism; whereas compressed work schedules did not. Further to this, the effect was said to be significantly less for those employees with higher autonomy to begin with (notably managerial grades). However, despite the apparent positive gains from flexible working, the authors found that too much flexibility had the opposite effect. In response to this, the authors cite Ronen (1981) who attributed this phenomenon to "scheduling problems... [that] ...can affect communication, supervision and task performance, especially if tasks are highly interdependent" (Baltes *et al.* 1999; p65). These authors also found that QoWL gains from flexible working diminish over time as it becomes accepted as the norm. However, their overall conclusion is that, despite this, there were no negative outcomes found as a result of introducing flexible working schedules. Perhaps then it is more about employee expectation, and that accepting a job on the understanding that it will involve shift patterns may not result in dissatisfaction, whilst shift patterns being introduced, or changing once an employee is in post may well result in discontent.

Overall, it would appear that a degree of flexibility allows employees to feel more in control of their working lives, which can result in a greater sense of satisfaction. The perception that management are interfering with how front line operatives do their job seemed to have a detrimental effect on the employee's regard for 'the management' and as such, the organisation.

3.4.3.3 Expectations

Employee perceptions of organisational expectations on them in relation to hours worked and performance standards. The degree to which employees feel able to discuss organisational expectations with their line manager to establish fair and appropriate shared expectations.

Issues of managerial and peer expectations were cited by respondents in the current study. In the case of trainee consultants and consultants, peer pressure was widely cited as normalising what was cast as a 'long hour's culture', where many of the respondents commented that they often felt pressure to stay late so as not to be adversely judged by team members:

"No-one wants to be the last in or first out of the office – it looks bad" (Male, Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Notably, respondents did explain that the expectation that they would work long hours had been explained to them when they joined the organisation. Some of the Miners commented that there is an expectation to do overtime if it is there to be done:

"If overtime is there to be done, you do it, that's just how it works" (Male, Miner, Mining Company).

The groups of Miners found it difficult to pin point where they felt these expectations originated from; whether it was at the organisational level, supervisor level or amongst their peers, nevertheless the impression these employees had was that expectations surrounding working overtime was strongly culturally normed.

For the paramedics and technicians the nature of the expectations they felt obligated to meet was quite different in that it related much more to meeting Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets, set by employers in response to central Government objectives around response times. One respondent even expressed the view that the job had become more about meeting expectations, in terms of response time targets, than about clinical excellence. Other groups interviewed discussed the fact that getting to an emergency within eight minutes, where the patient died was considered a success in that response time targets had been met.

"It seems like the outcome doesn't matter, as long as we get there in eight minutes. Surely the important thing should be that the patient makes it" (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

However, getting to a patient outside the eight minute response target, but saving their life was considered a failure because response time targets were not been met. This was considered by all respondents to be the wrong focus. The general sentiment here seemed to be that the focus should be on clinical excellence, as opposed to meeting time targets.

Other groups discussed expectations of doing preparatory work outside office hours and the impact this had on their work-life balance and ability to "switch off" at the end of the day or week. One member of the mixed group commented that in one role she was expected to do additional preparatory work at home using technology and systems that the organisation only provided access to onsite. One group of support staff interviewed agreed with their colleague who stated that *"people feel like they have to do more than it's possible to do in their thirty-seven hours"* (Female, Support Staff, Fire Service). A former teacher, turned supply teacher

commented that she had left her permanent job as a result of excessive demands to do preparatory work outside working hours.

Although previous literature does not explore the impact of expectation on QoWL, it could be interpreted in relation to Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) - characterised as the quality of the dyadic relationship between leader and employee - (see Settoon *et al.* 1996; Wayne and Ferris, 1990; and section 3.4.5.2 – *Quality of Relationship between Manager/Supervisor and Employee*, below), whereby good LMX would be characterised by high quality communication, thus ensuring that expectations are clearly communicated, understood and discussed and, as a result, any confusion related to what is expected is removed. In respect to peer expectations, peer pressure could be a factor, as indicated by comments made by the recruitment Consultancy employees. Indeed, Barron and Gjerde (1997) observe; "while it is well recognised that peer pressure can encourage additional work effort from co-workers, we find a potential downside to peer pressure. This arises because workers' choices concerning the extent of peer pressure do not take into account the costs such peer pressure imposes on co-workers" (Barron and Gjerde, 1997; p235).

Expectations appear to take different forms judging from the views expressed by respondents in the study reported here – they can arise from organisational targets, management demand, or perceptions that one must match the workplace performance and working hours of one's colleagues. While expectations are essential in ensuring that organisational objectives are met, such expectations need to be clear, consistent and fair, or they risk putting employees under excessive pressure.

3.4.3.4 Time Pressure

Employee perceptions of time pressure to get the job done; the degree to which employees feel stress as a result of perceived time pressure and, whether this is ongoing, or sporadic.

Time pressure was a common theme across many of the interviews in all of the organisations involved in the current study. Lack of staffing resources was a common topic of conversation in relation to time pressure, as exemplified by the following quotes from the groups of Miners interviewed;

"I think we maybe could do with a few more workforce actually. We're well undermanned." (Male, Operator, Mining Company).

"Man power has been cut down and it puts pressure on the crews" (Male, Mine Operator, Mining Company).

"There is not always enough cover to allow people to go on full training" (Male, Operator, Mining Company).

Lack of resources, in terms of staffing, was also cited as a problem by the Fire Fighters and support staff interviewed, which was also related back to high workload as *"you can never, ever get through it all and I think that does cause you to be worrying about workloads and what is falling off the desk at the moment, or has been for some while…"* (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service). One respondent spoke of a level of dread at coming back to work after time off due to insufficient staff to cover the workload while people are away, *"you know when you're coming back, you're coming back to a mountain of it because there's no-one else to do it…so I took my work mobile with me whilst I was on holiday just to do things like that because you know it won't all get done"* (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service). Other members of this group agreed that they too would check their work phone and/or email whilst on leave in case any urgent matters arose in their absence.

Time pressure was of a different nature for the paramedics interviewed, with most commenting that the eight minute response time put a huge pressure on them when getting a call out. Under resourcing was also cited as a cause of time pressure and one respondent stated that management seemed to see low resource levels as meeting targets, whilst people at the front line perceive it as a clinical issue. Although *Time Pressure* is clearly an issue for the Miners, Fire Service personnel and Ambulance Service personnel, the nature of the time pressure varies in that the Fire and Ambulance Service personnel have no control over the time pressure to which they must respond – theirs is pressure from external sources that cannot be controlled for or reasoned with for additional time. In contrast, the time pressure experienced by the mine workers is related to meeting production targets and therefore more predictable and not related to potentially life and death outcomes.

According to Waller *et al.* (2001) "time has become a critical feature of competitive organisational environments, and many organisations expect teams of employees to achieve high levels of performance under extreme time pressure" (Waller, *et al.* 2001 p586). However, there seems to be little in the way of direct research exploring the impact of time pressure on QoWL. Studies explore the impact of time pressure on team work (e.g. Waller *et al.* 2001), on creative thinking (Baer and Oldham, 2006) and on the development of a "crisis mentality" as a result of a lack of time to complete work (Perlow, 1999) and on decision-making (Verplanken, 1993). The level of control an individual has in relation to how they organise their time has also

been associated with stress resulting from perceptions of time pressure, alongside the degree to which they are required to switch from one activity to another, resulting in time fragmentation. Employees are also thought to feel heightened 'time-crunch' when they have little interest in the work they are required to undertake (Zuzanek, 2004). Furthermore, job stress in the form of 'over commitment', has been associated with having a negative effect on cardiovascular health (Lynch *et al.* 1997; Bosma *et al.* 1988), increased blood pressure and increased heart rate (Vrijkotte *et al.* 2000). Burnout has also been associated with workload, as well as emotional exhaustion (Demerouti *et al.* 2001), which has also been linked to jobs where an employee might be faced with people dying (e.g. Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998).

The Job Demand-Control (JDC) model (Karasek, 1979) explores the relationship between work and health, suggesting that in a high demand job, strain can be alleviated by high control over the work. However, criticisms of the model propose that it does not allow for identification of the degree to which job strain is attributable to high demand or lack of control (Hammar *et al.* 1994). As such, job strain might be the result of combined high demand and a lack of job control, rather than just of job demand that fails to be alleviated by job control (Van der Doef and Maes, 1999; Siegrist, 2006). An extension of the JDC model, the Job Demand – Control-Support model (JDCS) considers the mediating effect of social support on job strain (see van der Doef and Maes, 1999), which was highlighted in the interviews with paramedics whose stand-by points had recently been changed from their local station to points around the locality they serve, meaning that they had little opportunity to have a debrief with colleagues after a particularly difficult call out.

3.4.4 Quality of Peer Relationships

This theme relates to team relationships, social inclusion or exclusion and employee sense of 'belonging'. The sub-theme belonging to this theme is Camaraderie, which emerged from respondent comments relating to their relationships with colleagues and the perceived ameliorating impact of having a bad day at work on positive work relationships. Relationships with colleagues, when discussed directly (as opposed to with reference to fair treatment in comparison with others), were without exception discussed in terms of the positive impact of relationships with colleagues. This camaraderie was likened to that of *"a sports team"* (Male, Recruitment Consultant, recruitment Consultancy), and a *"family"* (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service; Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service), and was credited as being quite motivating, a source of fun, as a means of keeping the job going smoothly and to support and watch each other's' back.

While a strong sense of camaraderie might seem intuitive in the Fire and Paramedic Service and in the Mining Industry - where employees work in close teams and are dependent on each other for the overall well-being and safety of the team - the emergence of such a strong sense of team spirit amongst the Recruitment Consultancy employees indicates that it is not just in these critical team situations that camaraderie plays an important role in employee perceptions of their QoWL.

3.4.4.1 Camaraderie

Employees feel they have good working relationships, friendship and support from their team mates and are able to engage in 'banter' with their team mates whilst they work.

Relationships with colleagues was a common discussion point across a number of the focus group and one-to-one interviews. All trainee consultants and consultants talked about camaraderie, with references to the team being like a family, like a sport's team and providing a strong support network:

"We're more like a sports team with banter going around." (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"It's a good environment, it's got a good team and it's quite relaxed yet quite hard working at the same time. By relaxed I don't mean that we work in a lazy environment, I'd just say that you can openly talk about anything really" (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"People sort of talk across the tables and there is banter flying about, there is good vibe in general and sometimes more sort of senior guys sort of crack a joke and stuff like that" (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"You want to do well yourself, but you also want to see your colleagues do well as well." (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy);

"What motivates me is the people that sit around me" (Female, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Many other respondents from the paramedics and Miners groups interviewed also referred to their colleagues as being like a family. The Miners felt that this bond was particularly important given the nature of the job as *"the isolation underground means that everyone looks out for each other down the mine"* (Male, Mine Operator, Mining Company). Several of the office

support staff also referred to camaraderie as part of the reason they have stayed in the organisation, with one respondent commenting when asked what they most liked about where they work that *"I'd say first of all the team spirit within my individual department. Apart from the office itself, in the department we get on really well together"* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company). Other comments about camaraderie at work indicated that it made work much easier, more enjoyable and *"when you get on with people, the job goes more smoothly"* (Male, Operator, Mining Company).

Comments about relying on each other in potentially hazardous situations were made in the Miners groups and also in the Fire Fighters group. The Fire Fighters expressed the view that this *"great camaraderie and social life and the team dynamic counter balances the lack of trust in the organisation. We have to rely on each other in potentially fatal situations which makes you close in all areas – it's like family"* (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service). The camaraderie was also credited with being a major reason why people stay with the Fire Service as *"you do go through a lot of horrible things together so it is close knit. So I think on station's that's probably why people stay so long, especially some of the older guys on this station, because they've always done it and they're so close to everyone here"* (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service). The paramedics interviewed also expressed the view that the camaraderie helped them to deal with the difficult situations they face on a regular basis, but that recent changes to the system whereby staff are stationed roadside between call outs meant that there is not the same opportunity to talk through distressing call outs and get support from team mates. The paramedics' views in relation to camaraderie are typified by comments such as:

"These are family, you trust each other with your life, you watch each other's backs" (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service);

"There is fantastic camaraderie and support" (Male, Ambulance Technician, Ambulance Service).

Research suggests that social support can mitigate a number of negative aspects of stressful work situations and of shift work; e.g. nurses who reported higher levels of social support from colleagues also reported greater psychological wellbeing, lower work-home conflict, fewer physical symptoms and lower turnover intention (Pisarski and Bohle, 2001; Pisarski *et al.* 2006). High perceived co-worker support has also been associated with lower job dissatisfaction, and reduced impact of high job demands (van der Doef and Maes, 1999; Dollard and Winefield, 1998; de Jonge and Kompier, 1997). However, research by Brough and Pears (2004) found no significant association between co-worker support and psychological well-being or job satisfaction. Camaraderie was discussed by all groups and all cited it as an

important factor in enhancing or eroding QoWL. In all of the instances discussed it could also be interpreted as a protective factor, particularly in the case of the mining gangs, Fire Fighters, paramedics and technicians all of which commented that the camaraderie not only helped them deal with difficult situations, but also helped them to keep each other safe in potentially hazardous conditions.

The "buffer hypothesis" developed by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research (cited by Seers *et al.* 1983) suggests that the effects of stress at work will be weaker when employees have high levels of social support. This social support could be in the form of supervisor support, support at home or colleague support. Seers *et al.* (1983) found that family and friend support was related to overall satisfaction in relation to ambiguity and conflict at work, whereas work satisfaction was related to co-worker support. Pinneau (1976) found no evidence of such buffering, neither did research conducted by La Rocco and Jones (1978). However, La Rocco and Jones (1978) did find a correlation between leader and co-worker support and increased satisfaction and self-esteem.

While little research exists that explores the influence of camaraderie, or co-worker support, directly to QoWL, it would appear that the influence of positive co-worker support on reducing job demand stress, job dissatisfaction, as well as psychological and physical disease does influence QoWL and as such, deserves further scrutiny in relation to QoWL more directly.

3.4.5 Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff

This headline theme relates to employees' perceptions that they are appropriately communicated with, listened to and are afforded of the opportunity to engage in organisational decision making. It comprises two sub-themes that broadly represent the organisational level (Involvement and Engagement) and the more local level (Quality of the Relationship between Manager / Supervisor and Employee). This theme reflects respondent perceptions of the degree to which they feel the organisation listens to their views and takes these views on board or otherwise, incorporating perceptions of how approachable management are. Of those respondents who perceived their management to be approachable, reported this in positive terms where *"everyone gets the opportunity to say something"* (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy), while those who felt they were not being heard (and in some instances, not being invited to comment) perceived this to have a negative impact on decision making *"There are changes coming in for the worse without talking to people"* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Further discussion related more to local level relationships between employees and their managers, with those who reported that their managers have *"an open door policy"* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company) regarding this as having a positive impact on their experience of working life, whilst in contrast, others reported that their managers are *"just a photo on an intranet page"* (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service) never to be seen or spoken to directly.

3.4.5.1 Involvement and Engagement

Employees feel that they are encouraged to get actively involved in important decisions and aspects of working life and organisational change. Employees feel that they are consulted by the organisation about changes within the work place and that suggestions are heard and considered by the organisation.

In the current study perceptions in relation to this sub-theme were quite mixed across all organisations with some expressing the view that they did feel listened to and engaged and others stating the opposite, however, where the subject of engagement and participation was raised this was seen by respondents as positive and desirable. A number of the Trainee Consultants and Consultants expressed views along the lines of one comment that was made that *"even though the Directors are sort of making the decisions, everyone gets the opportunity to say something – they're approachable so you can go and talk to them"* (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).

Some of the respondents from the mining company commented that the new managers are *"listening to what the lads want more than going in and making decisions"* (Male, Mine Operator, Mining Company). Whilst in another group it was commented that people feel frustrated at not being listened to by management. At the time the interviews with employees from the mining company were conducted there had been a period of particularly bad weather with abnormal amounts of snow and this was used as an example of the lack of communication and consultation by a few of the respondents. One commented that *"there tends to be a lack of communication over it [what action should be taken on account of the snow and ice] as well, so some people go off home because they've got to get their children and that, and that's obviously their first thought, and then you find out a day or so later whether you have to take it as holiday, or a day in lieu or whatever"* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company).

The majority of the Fire Fighters stated that they felt their views were often overlooked and the *"first we hear about most things is when the policy comes out. Then when you ask a question you just get told that it's because that's what the policy says"* (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service).

However, one respondent did feel they could voice their opinion to their manager and their voice was heard, stating that they felt this was key *"even if they don't agree with you"* (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service). A number of the paramedics and technicians made similar comments in relation to a lack of consultation with regard to organisational change, with the general sentiment expressed summed up by the comment that *"the organisation needs to consult more with staff to get their views. There are changes coming in for the worse without talking to people…management need to talk to people who are positive and have good ideas"* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service). Research by Saks (2006) suggests that a perception of organisational support may enhance engagement and this would seem to be what many of the respondents involved in this current study were indicating with their comments.

Employee engagement has been the subject of scrutiny in relation to research that suggests improved engagement results in positive organisational outcomes (e.g. Bates, 2004; Harter *et al.* 2002). However, it has been suggested that much of the research to date lacks academic rigour and that the concept itself is ill-defined (Robinson *et al.* 2004). Definitions include those that focus on the degree to which an employee is committed to their organisation (e.g. Shaw, 2005), through to those that highlight the degree of effort they invest in their work (e.g. Frank *et al.* 2004). Kahn (1990) defines engagement in relation to psychological meaningfulness, safety and availability of work. The definition presented here focusses on the degree to which employees perceive that they are meaningfully consulted and listened to within the workplace.

Wagner (1994) asserts that employee engagement helps to "balance the involvement of managers and their subordinates in information-processing, decision-making, or problem-solving endeavours" (p312). However, Wagner concludes that the statistical significance of his findings that participation improves performance is too small to be practical and the cost of implementing such levels of engagement would discourage most organisations from investing. Other studies exploring the impact of involving employees in decision making have demonstrated that such involvement yields positive results. Siegel and Ruh, in 1973, published findings that suggest that employee participation in decision making increases job involvement, while Kim (2002) explored the role of "participative management' on job satisfaction in local government agencies concluding that "executive leaders and managers should become aware of the importance of manager's use of participative management, employees' participation in strategic planning processes, and the role of effective avenues of communication with supervisors" (p236). Indeed, Cotton (1995) questions Wagner's (1994) conclusions, pointing out that Wagner uses a very narrow definition of participation and commenting on Wagner's differentiation between statistical significance and practicality that "it doesn't matter [to Wagner] if findings are significant; they must also be large enough to be important" (p277).

Although the literature may be somewhat inconclusive as to the statistical significance of employee engagement, what is apparent is that employees themselves perceive it to be important in determining their QoWL. Lack of employee engagement has been associated with high turnover, high sickness absence and increased employee stress (Lunt *et al.* 2007); suggesting it should be ignored at the peril of the organisation.

3.4.5.2 Quality of the Relationship between Manager/Supervisor and Employee

Relates to the quality of the relationship and communication between the employee and their immediate manager. Positive relationships develop where an employee is able to communicate openly with their manager without fear of repercussion. This sub-theme encompasses perceptions of trust, fair treatment and openness of communication.

The majority of Trainee Consultants and Consultants expressed the view that the quality of the relationship with line management is key in ensuring good QoWL. Several stated that poor relationships with their manager had been a factor in them deciding to leave previous jobs and many commented that a positive factor for them in their current organisation was that the managers sat at the same desks as they did, rather than in an office, which made them more approachable. A number also commented that the fact that the management have worked their way up the company meant they would understand the job and its related challenges better, also increasing their approachability.

When asked what distinguished good managers one respondent commented that it is *"someone you can go and talk to, who'll listen to you. I think some are set in their ways and they're…it was their way or no way, do you know what I mean? Where like, you can go and talk to the manager now and he'll listen"* (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy). This was a sentiment echoed by a number of the respondents across different organisations. Further to this was a general view that *"If you've got the ear of your line manager and find them to be approachable I think, as well as an open door policy – that makes life a lot easier"* (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company) and that a lack of contact with managers could lead to a sense that they are not approachable and are *"just a photo on the intranet – you never see them face to face"* (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Further to this were perceptions of manager competence and understanding of the role carried out by their staff, particularly in the paramedic group, a number of whom expressed views along the lines of; *"managers don't know what it's like to be a front line paramedic. They make decisions based on statistics, not clinical assessment."* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

A further source of dissatisfaction came in the form of managers promising things and then not delivering on them. Comments from across the different organisations suggested that this introduces a sense that there is no point asking for anything from the manager thereafter as it will not materialise.

The relationship between manager/supervisor and employee emergent in the current study focus group and one-to-one discussions appear to share commonalities with explorations in the literature of a concept described as Leader-Member Exchange. Wayne *et al.* (2002) define LMX as "the quality of the exchange between the employee and the manager... based on the degree of emotional support and exchange of valued resources" (p590). The authors go on to state that the norm of reciprocity, where favourable acts by one party will initiate favourable acts in return from the other, is an important element of LMX, but they also assert that the exact nature of the acts that do tend to elicit this reciprocity has been the subject of few studies. As such, LMX has also been linked to rewards and fair treatment according to the authors, all aspects that can often be determined/controlled by one's line manager/supervisor.

Settoon *et al.* (1996) found that citizenship behaviours were related to the quality of LMX and that "the more that relationships or exchanges between supervisors and subordinates are based on mutual trust and loyalty, interpersonal affect, and respect for each, the better the subordinate's performance in terms of expected and "extra" or citizenship behaviours" (p224). Wayne and Ferris (1990) report findings that supervisor liking for an employee increased exchange quality, while Wayne and Green (1993) suggest that strong LMX increases those behaviours the employee perceives to directly benefit their supervisor.

Furthermore, supervisor support has been associated with alleviating work related stress (e.g. Bliese and Castro, 2000; Schirmer and Lopez, 2001). However, there is debate as to whether it is the emotional or more practical support – or indeed a combination of both – that is responsible for the alleviation (see Cohen and Wills, 1985). More recently, Brough and Pears (2004) found a strong association between supervisor support and job satisfaction, which highlights the potential importance of good leader-member exchange in retaining employees (e.g. see Graen *et al.* 1982; Vecchio, 1982; 1985). However, in Brough and Pears' (2004) research it was only the practical supervisor support, not the emotional, that had such an effect and this finding has been supported by occupational stress literature (see for example, Cooper *et al.* 2001). So LMX, it would seem, can not only benefit the experience the employee has in the workplace, but also that of their supervisor, provided the relationship is a positive one.

3.4.6 Intrinsic Job Satisfaction

This theme relates to the level of pride the employee feels in their contribution to the product or service they provide and any frustration they feel with the organisation when delivering this. Focus group and one-to-one interview responses explored aspects of working life that provided a sense of achievement, satisfaction, or a wider contribution to Society through work, and in some instances, this was cited as a mediating factor to other aspects of working life that respondents felt was lacking:

"I didn't want to let the kids down, so I couldn't leave my job until the end of term, despite the fact it was having a really negative effect on me personally" (Female, Teacher, Supply Work);

"The organisation doesn't value us as individuals, it's the getting out and helping people that makes it worthwhile" (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

3.4.6.1 Social Value from doing one's Job

Employee experiences a sense of pride in the job they do due to the outcomes/impact their work has on others.

In the current study this theme was most strongly reflected in the interviews with members of the Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services, where all respondents expressed pride and satisfaction in helping others through their work. In some instances this satisfaction was cited as a mediating factor against the perceived poor treatment received from the wider organisation. One respondent commented that they felt undervalued by the organisation but that the satisfaction gained by helping people in need made the job worthwhile. This sentiment was reflected by a member of the mixed group who had been a teacher in the past. The individual had left the profession due to poor treatment at the hands of their employer, but had stayed to finish the school year out of commitment to and pride in, working with the class assigned to them, commenting that *"no matter how I've been treated, I've stayed for the children I teach."* (Female, Teacher, Supply Work).

Comments that related to gaining intrinsic satisfaction from one's work are presented below and in themselves demonstrate the general consensus of feeling from those groups that discussed the theme:

"It's good to work with people and see results…to turn them around and absolutely change their lifestyle" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service);

"I think part of it is pride of being with the Fire Service and being part of the organisation" (Male, Retained Fire Fighter, Fire Service);

"From my point of view…dealing with people and helping them get better or change things…you know, just trying to sign post them and support them through that process" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service);

"There's a massive thing that goes with that role [Fire Fighter] that you're helping somebody out and saving somebody's life" (Male, Fire Fighter, Fire Service);

"It's good to be able to help people – it's rewarding" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service);

"The educational visits can be as rewarding as the firefighting work" (Male, retained Fire Fighter, Fire Service);

"For me one of the first things that kind of... that really made me love this job is changing people's lives" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service).

Paramedics expressed the view that in rescue situations they often felt as though they were 'blamed' for perceived mistakes, while other services were heralded heroes. In many instances respondents said, they felt their efforts went unnoticed. Although the social value theme was most prevalent in the paramedic and Fire Fighter groups, it was also mentioned by the consultants and is referenced in the literature in relation to job satisfaction and its impact on a range of outcomes including intention to quit (Agho *et al.* 1993; Cote and Morgan, 2002; Lambert *et al.* 2001) and performance (Iaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985; MacKenzie *et al.* 1998). There appears to be no literature that relates directly to perceived social value of job and QoWL. However, research does exist in relation to behaviours that are positive for the organisation (e.g. Puffer, 1987) or in relation to peoples' perceptions of the value of volunteer work (e.g. Wilson and Musick, 1997) but not in relation to the increased sense of QoWL employees may or may not achieve through work with the wider population.

3.4.7 Perceived Organisational Support

This theme relates to the level of support the organisation offers, particularly when the employee is experiencing difficulty in their life. Comments relating to this theme were emergent across the Fire and Ambulance Service employees, and reflected distrust of the wider organisation with perceptions that *"the organisation is getting more prescriptive and less trusting"* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).

Interestingly, this theme was notably absent in the Recruitment Consultancy respondents and may indicate that Perceived Organisational Support becomes increasingly difficult to manage in larger organisations with more layers of management and greater distance between the front line and decision makers.

3.4.7.1 Perceived Organisational Support

Employees feel confident that the organisation will support them at difficult and challenging times. Employees trust the organisation to appropriately support them when required.

In the groups from the Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services there was distrust of senior management and the organisation and a sentiment that accurate information about what happens at the front line does not necessarily reach the highest levels of the organisation, undermining perceptions of Perceived Organisational Support (POS), as exemplified by the following comment:

"I think there's a bit of people at higher levels sort of protecting themselves as well. They don't want that message to get up to the chief, for example, because they would kick the person below them, who would kick the next person and all that. So they want him, you know, to hear all the good things that senior managers are doing around the organisation, but doesn't want him to hear of the not so good things. So, I think you're right, but I think the other senior management board members have a tendency to be picky on what they filter through to him and what doesn't, if you see what I mean" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service).

Furthermore, there was a general sentiment across a number of the groups that the perceived 'compensation culture' means that organisations are in fact becoming less supportive and trusting of their staff , with one respondent summing it up as *"it feels like the organisation is getting more prescriptive and less trusting. They don't educate and empower you and the people making the decisions don't seem to understand the reality of being on the front line"* (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service). This perception that senior management and the wider 'organisation' do not understand the experiences and challenges of those at the front line seems to give employees the impression that senior management are, in general, unapproachable and that the organisation will not necessarily support them if required.

In their review of literature, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) found POS to be strongly associated with procedural justice, supervisor support, rewards and job conditions, indicating that a number of the other aspects of QoWL discussed above contribute to overall POS. Their review also supported findings indicating that POS is related to organisational commitment, job

satisfaction and, to a more moderate degree, job involvement and performance. It would appear then that when an employee perceives they have the support of their organisation, reciprocity is triggered benefitting both the organisation and the employee.

Wayne *et al.* (2002) define POS as "the exchange relationship between the employee and the organisation" that has been "conceptualised as employees' general perception of the degree to which the organisation values their contribution and cares about their well-being" (p590). For the purpose of this study the definition has been extended to include senior management as the respondents all distinguished between their relationships with senior management and more immediate managers in the nature of their comments such that senior management seem to be perceived as more representative of the organisation rather than regarded at a more individual, or personal level. In their study, Wayne *et al.* (2002) conclude that inclusion and recognition of employees by top management does in fact increase the employees' sense of POS, thus adding further justification for the inclusion of senior management behaviours in the POS definition. Rewards perceived as discretionary on the part of the organisation, rather than as a result of pressure from the workforce, policy or unions have been shown to enhance perceptions of POS, whereas those not considered discretionary do not have the same effect (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Shore and Shore, 1995).

POS has been associated with a number of positive outcomes for both the employee and the organisation, including job satisfaction and improved organisational performance, as well as creating a sense that the employee has an obligation to support the organisation in return for the POS (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Although none of the respondents related this POS directly to their QoWL, it was apparent by the nature and tone of the comments made that a negative view of POS did have an adverse impact on their experience of work and as such influenced their level of organisational commitment. According to Vandenberghe *et al.* (2004) poor organisational commitment is indirectly linked to employee intention to quit, thus suggesting dissatisfaction at work and as such, poor QoWL. Settoon *et al.* (1996) make reference to the fact that past research suggests that "positive, beneficial actions directed at employees by the organisation and/or its representatives contribute to the establishment of high-quality exchange relationships that create obligations for employees to reciprocate in positive, beneficial ways" (p219) indicating that a high level of POS should engender more citizenship behaviours and higher commitment to the organisation. POS has also been associated with procedural justice (Rhoades *et al.* 2001); job satisfaction (Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Tetrick, 1991) and leader-member exchange (Settoon *et al.* 1996).

3.5 Discussion

The process of identifying those constructs employees feel impact upon their QoWL involved conducting focus groups discussions (N=28) and one-to-one interviews (N=8) across a range of different organisations from the public sector, private sector; large and small organisations and across a range of different industries. Significant effort was expended to ensure that employees representing different levels and job functions within each organisation were engaged where possible, although the majority of respondents were from the front line/shop floor level. There was a high degree of homogeneity in the issues raised amongst respondents. Thematic Analysis resulted in the identification of seven key themes made up of 14 sub-themes identified as headline contributory influences on QoWL. An objective of the qualitative work was to provide insight into clusters of variables cited by employees as impacting on their QoWL to inform the approach to the quantitative study detailed in Study 2a (Chapter 4). Broadly, the same themes appeared across the different organisations and across groups/interviewees within each organisation, indicating a degree of agreement as to what influences QoWL. The emphasis was sometimes slightly different, but the core themes to arise the same.

3.5.1 Investment in Staff

3.5.1.1 Access to Training and Development Opportunities

All discussion topics raised have been covered in previous literature to some degree, although not necessarily in direct relation to QoWL. Published literature has explored the role of *Access to Training and Development Opportunities* (e.g. Choo and Bowley, 2007; Hall and Mirvis, 1995; Owens, 2006; Pugh, 1984; Wayne *et al.* 2002) and all groups interviewed expressed the desire to receive high quality training and development, with a sentiment that a lack of such provision impacted negatively on QoWL.

3.5.1.2 Non-Financial Rewards

Published literature indicates that *Non-Financial Reward* has an impact on job satisfaction and employee sense of feeling valued by their organisation (e.g. Cherrington et al, 1971; Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Shore, 1995; Sims and Szilagyi, 1975) and has also been associated with intention to quit (Rusbult and Farrell, 1983). Greatest value for reward was evident in the group of Recruitment Consultants interviewed, whose incentives to meet targets were heavily based around both financial and non-financial rewards. Comments emergent

through the interviews are congruent with research indicating that rewards are most powerful when particularly relevant to the employee and considered discretionary on the part of the organisation (see Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Share and Shore, 1995).

3.5.1.3 Career Progression Opportunities

Career Progression Opportunity has been associated in the published literature with job satisfaction and job performance (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992; Rice *et al.* 1989) as well as career satisfaction and organisational commitment (e.g. Couger, 1988; Lucas, 1989). Research by Compton (1987) and Woodruff (1980) indicates a model of attrition in relation to progression opportunities, with a lack of such opportunity resulting in job dissatisfaction. Clarity of progression opportunity and autonomy in relation to managing one's career progression were highlighted by a number of respondents as a key aspect of QoWL, with Paramedics commenting that they felt this was lacking and the Recruitment Consultants reporting a high degree of satisfaction with the autonomy and progression clarity afforded them.

3.5.1.4 Feedback and Praise

Feedback and Praise has been highlighted as a key aspect of employee engagement (Krause, 2005), a lack of which is associated with intention to quit, sickness absence and stress (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Feedback has been found to be most effective when it is immediate and direct (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; 1996). A number of the employees interviewed expressed the view that they receive little or no positive feedback and praise and found this demotivating, as well as providing them with no indication of where they are performing well and where they can improve.

3.5.2 Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment

3.5.2.1 Peer/Social Comparison

Comparison with others in the workplace was raised by respondents in relation to feeling that others in a similar position or role were better off than themselves, resulting in a detrimental effect on QoWL. Perceptions of interactional injustice have been associated with employee citizenship behaviour and employee commitment to their supervisor (Malatesta and Byrne, 1997), while perceptions of procedural injustice have been implicated in relation to intention to

quit (Masterson and Taylor, 1996) and organisational commitment (Malatesta and Byearsne, 1997) and this is supported by the comments made by respondents in the current study.

3.5.3 Job Demands / Workload

3.5.3.1 Balance between Work and Home Life

Balance between Work and Home Life was a significant discussion point across all groups interviewed and has been the subject of numerous studies. Mobile technology has been implicated as a remedial factor in rebalancing work and home life by some (e.g. Baruch, 2000; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Hill *et al.* 1998) and as a potentially complicating factor by others (e.g. Olson and Primps, 1984; Shamir and Salomon, 1985). Team work has been one area considered to be detrimentally affected by remote working (Callentine, 1995; Hill *et al.* 1998), but it is yet to be determined whether this detriment outweighs the potential benefits of not having to commute.

3.5.3.2 Flexibility and Choice

Flexibility has been indicated as improving employee job satisfaction ratings to a degree, but when flexibility impacts upon the ability of teams to meet, discuss and upon supervisors' ability to adequately supervise, it can have a detrimental effect (Baltes *et al.* 1999). Flexibility was desired by the majority of those interviewed and, inconsistencies in the degree of flexibility between employees/departments was cited as a cause of discontentment. The autonomy associated with greater flexibility and choice has been indicated as having a positive effect on QoWL in the literature (e.g. Cathcart *et al.* 2004; Watson, 1995) and high autonomy has been implicated as a mediating factor on high work demand (Siegrist, 2006).

3.5.3.3 Expectations

Expectations relating to working hours, and particularly perceived pressure to work long hours was cited by the Recruitment Consultancy cohort as having a negative effect on their QoWL, leaving them with little time after work to relax and participate in hobbies. Little research exists in relation to the role of such expectations, but peer pressure relating to working hours and the development of a 'long hour's culture' has been implicated as having a detrimental impact on employees (Barron and Gjerde, 1997). Such expectations may be related to other aspects of QoWL discussion topics raised, such as the relationship between employees and their line

manager (see below), where poor exchanges result in misunderstandings around expectations and result in pressure on employees to work long hours.

3.5.3.4 Time Pressure

Time Pressure was emergent as a discussion point across a number of the focus group and one-to-one interviews, with a lack of resourcing resulting in increased pressure to get the job done cited by respondents from the Mining Company, Fire Service personnel and Ambulance Service personnel. Time pressure has been associated with a number of negative health and work-related outcomes including, cardiovascular ill-health (Lynch *et al.* 1997; Bosma *et al.* 1998), increased heart rate and blood pressure (Vrijkotte *et al*. 2000) as well as inhibition of creative thinking (Baer and Oldham, 2006), and burnout (Demerouti *et al.* 2001).

3.5.4 Quality of Peer Relationships

3.5.4.1 Camaraderie

Camaraderie was discussed by all groups interviewed and its perceived value highlighted by all. This was particularly prevalent in the mine workers, paramedic and Fire Service employee comments, all of whom are highly dependent on their teams in the conduct of their day-to-day duties. Social support has been implicated as having a buffering effect on workplace stress (Seers *et al.* 1983) but evidence here is mixed, with studies refuting such findings (La Rocco and Jones, 1978; Pinneau, 1976) but indicating a correlation between leader and co-worker support and satisfaction instead. Social support has been associated with greater psychological well-being, lower work-home conflict, lower levels of physical symptoms and lower intention to quit (Pisarski and Bohle, 2001; Pisarski *et al.* 2006), as well as lower job dissatisfaction and mitigation of the effects of high job demands (van der Doef and Maes, 1999; Dollard and Winefield, 1998; de Jonge and Kompier, 1997); although this has been refuted by Brough and Pears (2004) who found no such associations.

3.5.5 Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff

3.5.5.1 Involvement and Engagement

A number of the groups interviewed across the organisations involved made reference to a lack of involvement and engagement in decision making and associated frustrations at not feeling heard. Research suggests that engaging employees in decision making yields positive results,

including increased job involvement (Siegel and Ruh, 1973), while lack of engagement may result in increased intention to quit, sickness absence and employee stress (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Lack of engagement in decision making was related to employees feeling confused about what action to take in novel situations and as to why certain policies have been implemented, as well as the introduction of changes that are perceived by the workforce as being detrimental to their QoWL. Criticisms of the literature relating to engagement relate to a lack of research with sufficient academic rigour and ill-defined concepts of what constitutes involvement and engagement.

3.5.5.2 Quality of the Relationship between Manager / Supervisor and Employee

Getting on well with your manager and feeling supported by him/her was cited by the majority of respondents as being an important aspect of their QoWL. Supervisory support has been associated with greater job satisfaction and employee retention (Brough and Pears, 2004; Graen et al., 1982; Vecchio, 1982; 1985), increased citizenship behaviours (Settoon *et al.* 1996) and increased behaviours that employees perceive will benefit their supervisor (Wayne and Green, 1993). Supervisory support has also been implicated in mediating work-related stress (Bliese and Castro, 2000; Schirmer and Lopez, 2001), although there is debate regarding whether it is the emotional or practical support (or a combination of both) that is responsible for this effect (Cohen and Wills, 1985).

3.5.6 Intrinsic Job Satisfaction

3.5.6.1 Social Value from doing one's Job

Perceptions of the value, or contribution one makes through their work has been associated with intention to quit (Agho *et al.* 1993; Castor and Specter, 1987; Cote and Morgan, 2002; Lambert *et al.* 2001) and performance (Iaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985; MacKenzie *et al.* 1998), although there is no research directly relating it to QoWL. Paramedic and Fire Service respondents, as well as some of the Recruitment Consultants interviewed highlighted the importance of feeling that they were making a positive contribution to their QoWL, so it would appear that this is an important area for further investigation.

3.5.7 Perceived Organisational Support (POS)

3.5.7.1 Perceived Organisational Support

Perceived Organisational Support (POS) has been associated with a number of positive outcomes, including greater job satisfaction, improved organisational performance and reciprocity. Procedural justice, supervisor support, job conditions and rewards have all been implicated as possible influencing factors on POS (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Furthermore, poor perceptions of organisational support have been linked to increased intention to quit (Vandenberghe *et al.* 2004). In the current study, POS appeared to be eroded by perceptions of management mistrust, lack of management understanding of what life is like at the front line of the organisation and an impression that management are unapproachable.

3.6 Conclusions

- By far the greatest debate across the discussions came in relation to those areas that were lacking. This might indicate a model of attrition, whereby the absence of factors relating to good QoWL highlights their importance to those experiencing the absence.

- In many of the discussion topics raised there is little or no *directly* relevant published literature indicating a general need for greater scrutiny of the influence of these constructs on QoWL.

- Study 1 results suggest that when one area of QoWL is poor, the importance of other areas seems to take on higher salience to employees who seem to seek to redress the imbalance. For example, some of the respondents from the Paramedic Service reported low level of *Perceived Organisational Support* and low levels of *Involvement and Engagement*. In these instances respondents indicated that their motivation for going to work each day hinged upon the *Camaraderie* and the *Social Value from doing One's Job* elements – feeling like they were having a positive impact on the lives of those people they helped.

- Analysis of Study 1 has identified the themes most prominent to employees when they talk about what impacts on their QoWL, whilst also highlighting the notion that these factors are not entirely discrete from one another, in that short-comings in some areas tend to predict that others will also fall short. The saving grace of these areas of

shortfall is the positive impact of other areas of QoWL that appear to mitigate/ameliorate (to some degree) these negative elements.

- A high degree of homogeneity is evident in the aspects of QoWL important to the majority of respondents.
- A range of public and private sector, different job grades and varying industries are represented in the current study indicating that those aspects of QoWL important to employees appear to be generalisable across a wide range of roles and vocations.

Overall, this study raised a number of insights into not only the range of QoWL related variables employees value, but also the degree of homogeneity across employment sectors (public and private) and a range of job grades and job roles. These findings were considered to provide a sound basis for development of the employee survey discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Study 2a - Quantitative Exploration of Variables Impacting on Quality of Working Life

4.0 Introduction

The aim of this study was to use the grounded insight from Study 1 to confirm and further explore core influences on QoWL, in particular to address issues of their generalisability, based on a larger, potentially more representative sample. The perspective here, of building theory from tapping employee perspectives, mirrors exploratory approaches in the work and well-being domain e.g. characterising components of workplace Safety Culture/Climate (Weyman *et al.* 2005; also see Cox and Flin, 1998). A further parallel, relates to the core focus of this thesis on situational influences on QoWL, rather than individual differences. In this regard the perspective also mirrors that of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards Model of work related stress, i.e. the identification and characterisation of latent causal influences represents step-one to informing thinking over redressing undesired effects (see Cousins *et al.* 2004; MacKay *et al.* 2004).

The Management Standards perspective, with its emphasis on job-demands, control, support and relationships is perhaps more intuitively aligned with QoWL, given its core emphasis on the psychosocial components of climate. In each case, the rationale for focusing on contextual components relates to the theory of change and, the scope for change (Austin and Bartunek, 2013). Specifically, while individuals are prone to vary in terms of their desires and aspirations in relation to work, elements that impact upon experiences arising from the workplace, particularly where these come to represent shared experiences, are potentially malleable and amenable to change through employer intervention.

A focus on contextual components further reflects contemporary calls for a paradigm shift in public and occupational health emphases from a treatment to a prevention focus (Black 2008; Taylor *et al.* 2012). It also reflects the established risk management principle of a hierarchy of control orientated around prevention and mitigation of harm (HSE HSG65, 2013). A feature that the Safety Climate and Management Standards approaches to workplace health and safety share is the aim to enable organisations to learn about potential threats to employee well-being and to use this insight to adopt a proactive/preventative approach (Black, 2008) through the identification and mitigation/removal of potential sources of harm. A central premise is that recognising threats to employee well-being and how these may vary between different groups of

employees (in the sense of differential degrees of exposure) is fundamental to organisational learning to inform thinking over strategic intervention. Organisational learning in this context is about gathering and acting upon information on precursors to failure. Risk management/mitigation principles and practice are well established in relation to traditional workplace health and safety issues, with clear guidance as to what is expected of employers to conform with their *'Duty of care'* (Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974; ***Management** of **Health** and **Safety at Work** Regulations* 1999; HSG65, 2013). The landscape is somewhat less well defined in relation to psychosocial risk, with evidence that poor working conditions can result in harm (e.g. stress), but the relationship between hazard and harm and evidence of causality is not easy to clearly demonstrate (Mackay *et al.* 2004).

Contemporary perspectives and practice on intervention in this area tend to be dominated by an individual, treatment model, e.g. training individuals in ways to better 'manage' potential stressors associated with their work, and rehabilitation of those who have succumbed, for example, rather than addressing root causes notably associated with job demands this could/may be achieved via the configuration of work and management style (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Relatedly, to effectively manage employee QoWL an organisation first needs to have insight into what is important to its employees and how current arrangements impact on this. Lagging indicators, such as staff turnover; sickness absence and productivity rates may embody QoWL related effects, but reveal very little with regard to causal influences.

It is held that the principles of the established risk management and mitigation perceptive are generalisable to the broader domain of the management of well-being, which includes variables that impact on QoWL. Primary risks in this context relate to risks to the employing organisation, rather than employees *per se*. Intuitively undesired impacts associated with poor QoWL relate to degraded employee motivation (Danish and Usman, 2010), reduced organisational commitment (Ensher *et al.* 2001; Hill *et al*. 1998; Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992) and increased staff turnover (Somers, 2010; Vandenberghe *et al.* 2004), and ultimately, sub-optimal organisational performance (Eaton, 2003; Kim *et al.* 2004; Markham *et al.* 2010). A central tenet of the safety climate/Management Standards perspectives, shared with the approach advanced here, is that essential insight can be derived from tapping into employee perspectives.

Beyond confirming the headline components of QoWL identified in Study 1 (see Chapter 3), and going some way towards addressing their generalisability on a larger sample, this second study aimed to work towards providing the foundation for the development of a QoWL workplace climate measure. With these objectives in mind, the approach adopted was a quantitative survey, distributed to a relatively large and demographically diverse sample of

employees (N=442) across a range of employment sectors, occupations, job grades, age cohorts and gender.

Methodologically, a strength of adopting a quantitative approach in this second study was considered to reside in the element of triangulation that it brought to Study 1 findings. Additionally, it was considered that a quantitative approach based on Factor Analysis, not only reflected mainstream practice in complementary areas (notably workplace safety climate/culture), but afforded advantages in respect of a core objective of refining the relatively large number of themes and sub-themes to emerge from Study 1 into what might be regarded as a core set of constructs. In view of the desire to identify a finite number of defining constructs, and reflecting alignment with the health and safety climate and Management Standards perspectives, the format adopted was one of presenting respondents with a set of QoWL related statements against which they were invited to indicate their level of agreement, referenced to a 5 point Likert-type scale, i.e. a format well-suited to Principal Component Analysis.

The self-complete questionnaire was distributed electronically to an opportunity sample of all of the employees within the organisations that participated in Study 1. This was supplemented further via additional distribution using the social networking sites *Facebook* and *LinkedIn*. The researcher also wrote two blogs about the research on *BlogSpot* hosted by *Google* (with links to the questionnaire) and distributed the questionnaire at two business/managerial conferences.

The Principal Component Analysis revealed six factors that embodied strong alignment with the themes identified in Study 1 (see Chapter 3). The constructs identified in this second Study were named as: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Training and Development; Flexibility; Intrinsic Job Satisfaction;* and *Work-Life Balance*.

4.1.1 Aim

The aim of this research was to further explore and identify core determinants of QoWL.

4.1.2 Objectives

- to generate a self-complete questionnaire, designed to address the above aim;
- to explore the underlying factor structure for variables cited as impacting on QoWL;
- to explore the degree of parity with the constructs identified in Study 1.

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Survey format

Following precedents in exploratory workplace climate research, with the aim of generating data sets suitable for Exploratory Factor Analysis, the questionnaire used in this research took the form of a randomly presented set of statements against which respondents were invited to indicate their agreement using a five point Likert-type scale, with anchors of strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree; strongly disagree.

The key strengths of this format were considered to be:

- its high familiarity - most people at some point in their life have previously completed a survey using a Likert-type scale;
- the ease and speed of completion - it is an economical method for gathering responses on a relatively wide range of related topics, with a tendency towards higher completion rates than other alternatives. (Edwards 1997);
- the strong precedent to transform semantic judgements of agreement into numerical values (see, for example, Oppenheim, 2000).

In addition to the specific attitude statements used, respondents were also asked to enter demographic information relating to: age; gender; hours of work, including shift patterns (referenced to the preceding 7 days); profession/job title/role; employment sector; whether their job was primarily public facing; the size of the organisation; nature of their contract (permanent, or temporary); tenure; number of sick days in the previous 12 months (including number of days sick attributable to work). Furthermore, drawing on insight from participant accounts in Study 1, including their own interpretations with reference to published findings, a battery of 127 Likert-type attitude statements was generated.

4.2.2 Development of the Question Set

The items developed were designed to be easily understood, with little/no room for misinterpretation (pilot work was undertaken to minimise this risk, see section 4.2.3). They were designed to reflect the interpretation of the themes (and their respective components) identified in Study 1. The items were configured to reflect the opinions and sentiments expressed by respondents, where possible, using the terminology used in their own accounts (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. *Study 1 Sub-themes and Quotes and Related Study 2a Items*

Study 1 Theme: Investment in Staff Study 1 Sub-theme: Feedback and Praise	
Study 1 Quote(s)	Study 2a Item(s)
"you only get feedback when things are bad – you don't hear when things are good" (Male, Mine Operative, Mining Company)	When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager I am given good feedback on the work I do
"[you] don't get much positive feedback in the Service or in the press" (Female, Paramedic, Ambulance Service).	

Study 1 Theme: Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment Study 1 Sub-theme: Peer / Social Comparison	
Study 1 Quote(s)	Study 2a Item(s)
"Basically, if your face fits you know... any favour you ask, you get" (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company)	I often feel that I am not treated fairly compared with my colleagues
"you're still treated not as well as the whole time Fire Fighters, but yet you do more hours." (Male, Retained Fire Fighter, Fire Service).	People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation

Study 1 Theme: Job Demands / Workload Study 1 Sub-theme: balance between Work and Home Life	
Study 1 Quote(s)	Study 2a Item(s)
"I don't necessarily mind working the hours that I work, but I wish the day was longer so that I could do other things as well." (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).	I often work more than 40 hours per week When I finish work for the day I am too tired to do anything else
"... my life outside of work I've had to put almost on the back burner, so to speak, because we're in the office until like half six, seven o'clock and sometimes later." (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).	

Study 1 Theme: Job Demands / Workload

Study 1 Sub-theme: Time Pressure

Study 1 Quote(s)	Study 2a Item(s)
"you can never, ever get through it all and… …that does cause you to be worrying about workloads" (Male, Support Staff, Fire Service).	I feel I often have to work faster than I would like in order to get all my work done
"a few of us ended up talking about this idea that you just think "I'll just have a quick look and see if there's anything urgent that I need to know about before I walk in the door, to deal with" and we were all saying that we all sleep really badly on a Sunday night. I think it is that your brain is almost gearing up for what you're facing in the week." (Female, Support Staff, Fire Service).	I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home

Study 1 Theme: Quality of Peer Relationships

Study 1 Sub-theme: Camaraderie

Study 1 Quote(s)	Study 2a Item(s)
"...we're more like a sports team with banter going around." (Male, Recruitment Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy).	There is good team spirit in my area of work
"I'd say first of all the team spirit within my individual department. Apart from the office itself, in the department we get on really well together." (Female, Support Staff, Mining Company).	The friendly working environment in my department makes me want to come to work

Study 1 Theme: Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff

Study 1 Sub-theme: Involvement and Engagement

Study 1 Quote(s)	Study 2a Item(s)
"The company doesn't listen to us, they don't understand what it is we do and yet they make all the decisions." (Male, Paramedic, Ambulance Service)	Changes at work are often made without staff having a say in them
	I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me

Whilst maintaining a focus on the meaning and sentiments expressed by Study 1 respondents, the terminology and references used within the items also needed to be sufficiently generalisable to be meaningful generically, i.e. to make sense and be relevant to a diverse sample of respondents. The multidimensional nature of QoWL, in conjunction with the fact that aspects of QoWL do not all necessarily intercorrelate (e.g. respondents may feel that the *Social Value* aspects of their work are high, having a positive impact on their QoWL but that *Involvement and Engagement* are poor, as seen with the Paramedic Services respondents in Study 1) necessitated that each area of interest for inclusion in the item set required exploration through a number of sub-constructs (these were mapped onto the sub-themes identified in Study 1). Care was taken to ensure that the principle of parsimony was also followed (Spector, 1992) to guard against too large an item set that could lead to high respondent fatigue on completion. Ultimately, the item set needed to reflect the range of sentiments and facets reflected in each of the themes and sub-themes emergent through the Study 1 focus group and one-to-one interviews and via insight gained from the extant literature. As a result, the number of items developed to reflect each sub-theme varied from four, to thirteen items depending on the complexity of the sub-theme and the facets of each sub-theme that the related item set needed to reflect.

4.2.2.1 Number of Items

Research findings on the impact of survey length are mixed, with some authors reporting a positive correlation between survey length and higher numbers of non-response rates (those who had the opportunity to complete the survey, but chose not to) (Duetskens *et al.* 2004; Yammarino *et al.* 1991), while others report no relationship (Cook *et al.* 2000)**.** Furthermore, survey length is defined in different ways – by the number of questions, number of pages or time taken to complete (Vicente and Reis, 2010) – thus complicating comparisons between study findings. Duetskens *et al.* (2004) compared non-response rates between surveys purporting to take 15-30 minutes to complete, as compared to those professing to take 30-45 minutes to complete. The shorter survey achieved a 24.5% response rate, as compared with a 17.1% response rate for the longer survey. Additionally, there were more respondent drop-outs (those who started, but failed to complete the survey) for the long survey than the short survey, a finding mirrored in more recent research by Ganassali (2008).

The question development process outlined above resulted in the production of a relatively large number of items (127). Piloting (see section 4.2.3) revealed a completion time ranging from 20-30 minutes – a relatively modest length survey by the standard set by Duetskens *et al,* (2004). A larger number of statements could have been configured. However, any gains from this needed

to be balanced against the risk of inducing respondent fatigue and de-motivation from an excessively large battery. It was therefore decided to follow reported precedents, by limiting the size of the question set to be broadly equivalent to workplace climate studies with a similar intent (e.g. Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Sirgy *et al.* 2001; Weyman *et al.* 2003) and of sufficient size to present a low risk of identifying weak constructs.

4.2.2.2 Semantic Directionality of Items

There are arguments for and against the use of positively and negatively phrased questions in attitude survey development. Proponents of the inclusion of both suggest that the practice reduces respondent acquiescence bias, whereby the respondent goes into 'auto-pilot' and agrees with questions indiscriminately. It is also claimed to reduce extreme response bias (polarisation at one or other end of the scale). Either phenomenon is held to distort estimates of the mean and/or the outcomes of any statistical analysis conducted on the data set (Spector, 1992). It is claimed that a mix of directionality forces respondents to consider each question with the aim of increasing meaningful responses. Counter arguments however, are that the inclusion of mixed directionality questions risks confusing respondents (e.g. Colosi, 2005), leading to error and the distortion of results, particularly where the distribution between positively and negatively framed items is grossly unbalanced and disproportionate. There is also a risk that semantic reversal can result in awkwardly phrased items (Oppenheim, 2000). After careful consideration of the semantics the developed question set featured 86 positively and 41 negatively phrased questions (a 68% / 32% split). This was the highest level of balance that could be achieved without making items semantically awkward and unnatural.

4.2.3 Piloting the Question Set

4.2.3.1 Cognitive Pilot

Prior to quantitative piloting, the item set was subjected to a cognitive pilot involving a small sample of respondents (N=4) to assess understanding and sense-making. Respondents were selected to represent a range of employment sectors and grades. They were emailed a copy of the survey for on-line completion, along with a set of completion instructions, including a brief on the purpose of the pilot. Comments were elicited on sense-making, presence of ambiguities, the clarity of statements, ease with which the language could be understood and typographic errors. They were also asked to comment on the clarity of the instructions to participants. Two respondents returned their comments in written form and two verbally, face-to-face, with the researcher. The two written responses were followed up with a telephone conversation to gain

clarification of the points raised. A number of minor amendments to the phrasing of some of the statements and to the instructions to respondents were made, based on this feedback.

4.2.3.2 Quantitative Pilot

A draft version of the survey was produced. The order in which items were presented was randomised (items drawn from a bag). In accordance with research indicating that the format and style of the survey can influence response rates (Couper *et al*. 2004), items were presented in blocks of 10 per page/screen to make completion of the survey less intimidating than presenting them in continuous list.

The quantitative pilot was conducted in the Information Technology Department of a large technology company in March 2012 (see Table 4.2). Respondents (N=25) were, again, invited to submit comments relating to the clarity of the statements made, ease with which the language could be understood, any ambiguity or typographic errors that were evident using a free text box on the final screen. Accordingly, a few comments were received, which lead to some minor amendments to the items used. Overall, the respondents expressed the view that they found the survey clear and easy to understand. Lastly, responses to the items were also checked for skew and kurtosis, and any heavily skewed/kurtotic items were removed.

Table 4.2. *Quantitative Pilot Sample (N = 25)*

Job role	No. of respondents
Manager/Supervisor	14
Developers	3
Analysts	6
Support Staff	2

4.2.4 Data Gathering

4.2.4.1 Sampling

A recognised limitation of Study 1 related to questions that might be raised over the generalisability of findings, given the relatively small sample size and limited number of employment sectors represented. Study 2 aimed to address this by recruiting a larger and more diverse sample from a wider range of employment sectors. Web-based surveys have been shown to yield low response rates (Couper, 2000; Manfreda *et al.* 2008) and potential sampling error due to the fact that not everyone has internet access (Couper, 2000). Furthermore, sampling bias

can be introduced via this specific survey administration approach given that internet use tends to be higher in younger, more educated individuals (Hudson *et al.* 2004). In essence, a random stratified approach to sampling would have been the preferred method. However, this was not possible given that access to participants was limited to those organisations and individuals the researcher was able to recruit though existing contacts. As a result, recruitment was limited to an opportunity sample, presenting a potential limiting factor. In view of this, a number of steps were taken in an attempt to produce a diverse volunteer sample. Specifically, this involved the use of a multiple method recruitment strategy via:

- an embedded email link sent out to employers within a sample of work organisations across different employment sectors including; Information Technology, Fire Service, Ambulance Service, Teachers and Telecommunications;
- social and professional on-line network links - *LinkedIn* and *Facebook;*
- a dedicated web-blog, and;
- hard-copy distribution at two business conferences.

4.2.4.2 Administration of the Survey

Both electronic and hard-copy versions of the survey were produced (see Appendix F – Psychometric Survey). The electronic version of the survey was made available via the sample of organisations (N=5) using an on-line survey link, which was active for a period of six weeks from 2nd April 2012 – 14th May 2012. Reminders were sent out to respondents asking them to complete the survey (if they hadn't already done so) every seven days. Weekly reminders were also posted for respondents recruited via the social network sites *FaceBook* and *LinkedIn*.

Updates relating to the number of responses to the survey were also posted on-line once a week, in an effort to maintain visibility of the survey and encourage those who hadn't yet participated to do so. The feedback provided also included information about how close the researcher was to achieving her 'target' minimum number of responses sets. In each case the embedded on-line links took respondents to the survey site and all responses were submitted directly to the researcher via the survey site upon completion.

4.2.4.3 Realised Sample

The sampling strategy produced a relatively large and diverse sample (N=442) in terms of age, gender, occupation, job-grade and employment sector (see tables 4.3 and 4.4). The sample included: administrators, accountants, teachers, paramedics, computer analysts, electricians, solicitors, auditors, hospitality staff, health and safety professionals, management consultants, fire fighters, labourers, nurses, senior managers, teachers, receptionists – and more, from a variety of different employment sectors including: aeronautics, catering and hospitality, charity/not for profit, mining and mineral extraction, construction, education, finance, health, Information Technology (I.T.), media, retail, public sector health care, telecommunications and public utilities. Respectively, Tables 4.3 and 4.4 provide a breakdown of the sample by Standard Industry Code (SIC) and a range of primary demographics.

Table 4.3. *Breakdown of Job Types in Response Set*

Distribution by employment sector (SIC)	No. of responses
Mining and quarrying	80
Manufacturing	4
Electricity, gas, air conditioning supply	4
Water supply, sewerage, waste	24
Construction	30
Wholesale, retail, repair of vehicles	1
Transport and storage	1
Accommodation and food services	17
Information and communication	8
Financial and insurance activities	6
Professional, scientific, technical activities	44
Admin and support services	17
Public admin and defence	3
Education	19
Health and social work	75
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3
Other service activities	21
Undisclosed	76
Total	442

4.2.4.4 Potential for Sample Bias

The sample frame, whilst diverse in nature, reflected a number of limitations, not least, in terms of the notable variation in the size of the sub-groups across the different sectors. The ratio of full-time (84%) to part-time (12.4%) employees also departed from current UK proportions. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that part-time employees comprise ~25% of the UK workforce (ONS 2010). The ratio of public to private sector employees was 1:2; significantly higher than the 1:5 quoted by ONS (2013), meaning that, public sector employees were over-represented within the sample. Additionally, most respondents (62.2%) were employed in large organisations and on permanent contracts, which influence the generalisability of these findings with respect to small and medium sized organisations (SMEs)and temporary employees (According to ONS (2010) figures, 59.6% of the working population were employed in SMEs). Furthermore, the high number of respondents from public sector organisations in the sample may account for part of the size of employing organisation bias. Additionally, the sample also reflected a notable gender bias, being 55% male versus 33% female (according to the ONS (2013) the UK workforce now reflects a roughly equal split by gender), with the remaining 12% choosing not to disclose their gender. Lastly, the sample by intention (due to the focus on employer practices), was also limited to individuals employed by others rather than self-employed and, individuals with a single employer as opposed to multiple employers.

In view of the above it is plausible that the sample may be open to some criticism, specifically, on the grounds of being disproportionately male and large organisation and public sector biased. Accordingly, any conclusions drawn may reflect bias – that being if the perspectives of these groups can be considered different or unrepresentative of the wider working population. However, more positively, the diversity achieved within the final sample equalled or exceeded that reported in the majority of other known studies of QoWL. The notable disproportional size and variability of the sub-samples and certain segments (particularly in terms of employment sector), did however, limit the scope for exploring demographic differences (see Chapter 5).

4.3 Results

4.3.1 Method of Analysis Applied

There is considerable debate within the literature relating to the relative merits of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and the circumstances under

which each should be considered the more appropriate. Whilst this decision rests, in part, on the judgement of the researcher, there are guidelines that underpin this choice.

Table 4.4. *Sample Primary Demographics*

Demographic	Number of respondents (N)	Percentage of sample
Full-time employees	371	84%
Part-time employees	55	12.4%
Undisclosed	16	3.6%
Private sector respondents	258	58.4%
Public sector respondents	122	27.6%
Undisclosed	62	14%
Large organisations (>250 staff)	275	62.2%
Medium organisations (51-250 staff)	46	10.4%
Small organisations (<50 staff)	63	14.3%
Undisclosed	58	13.1%
Temporary/contract workers	20	4.5%
Permanent employees	362	81.9%
Undisclosed	60	13.6%
In role >5 years	190	43%
In role 1-5 years	138	31.4%
In role <12 months	57	12.8%
Undisclosed	57	12.8%
Male	243	55%
Female	146	33%
Undisclosed	53	12%

Confirmatory Factor Analysis requires a strong hypothesis based on underlying theory (Williams, 1995) as the method is applied with the aim of examining expected causal relationships between variables and as a basis for the acceptance or rejection of hypotheses (Hurley *et al.* 1997). The aim of this analysis however, was to *explore* which factors might emerge for the purpose of developing a new model, rather than to formally *test* whether the emergent factors confirmed the Study 1 findings. Therefore, no *strong* a priori theory was being tested here, so the aim of the analysis was to identify a simple underlying factor structure and refine (iteratively reduce) the item set in respect of this underlying structure. In light of this, Exploratory Factor Analysis was considered to offer a number of advantages over Confirmatory Factor Analysis as the method of inquiry.

Selection of the most appropriate method for Exploratory Factor Analysis is also a hotly debated topic (see Thompson and Daniel, 1996). Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) uses estimates of reliability in the extraction process and focuses on latent factors, while Principal Component Analysis (PCA) seeks simply to reduce the items into fewer components. While care is recommended in selecting the method applied (Gorsuch, 1990), for the purposes of interpretation the difference is often said to be negligible (Thompson, 1992).

Although statistical packages (in this instance SPSS) can present possible factor structures, the judgement, reflection and subsequent interpretation by the researcher is central to the refinement and acceptance of the emergent factor structures. As Tabachnick and Fidell (p. 636; 1996) note, "the final choice among alternatives depends on the researcher's assessment of its interpretability and scientific utility". In light of this, and following precedents within exploratory work of this type, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was the method selected[2].

4.3.1.1 Pre-analysis Checks

Before commencing the analysis a number of pre-analysis checks were performed on the data (see Ferguson and Cox, 1993). Fourteen respondents neglected to supply any of the requested demographic information. Hence, these response sets were removed, leaving a total of 429 response sets where respondents had supplied at least some of the demographic information requested.

Factor Analysis assumes that the distribution of each variable presented has univariate normality, i.e. that they conform to a normal distribution. The individual items were examined for skew and kurtosis (see Appendix H for descriptive statistics). Items also need to have the capacity to discriminate. All items returned moderate to high standard deviations (range 0.764 to 1.328), exceeding the recommended minimum of 0.30 (see Gable, 1986), whilst none of the items used fell outside the acceptable range for skew and kurtosis (see Ferguson and Cox, 1993).

A summary of additional checks of the suitability of the data set for Factor Analysis and the potential to produce a stable factor structure are detailed in Table 4.5 (see Ferguson and Cox, 1993). Based on these criteria, it was concluded that the data set met the criteria for further analysis.

[2]Analysis performed using Principle Axis Factoring extraction resulted in a very similar structure to PCA

Table 4.5. *Criteria for Conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis*

Recommended	**Actual**
Respondents to variables ratio 2:1 to 10:1	3.14:1
Minimum sample size 100^{+}	Sample size N=428
Ratio of variables to expected factors 2:1 to 6:1	Estimated 16:1*
Ratio of respondents to expected factors 2:1 to 6:1	Estimated 53:1*
<25% items exceed +/-2xSE of skew/kurtosis	<25% of items affected
Kaiser Mayer Olkin (KMO) value >/= 0.5	KMO value = .964
Bartlett test of sphericity is significant	Bartlett = 0.00

*Based on the number of factors derived from study 1

4.3.1.2 Principal Component Analysis

Initially, factor extraction identified a number of weak items that had low loadings on all factors. Hence, these items were removed and the Factor Extraction repeated with the remaining items loading at 0.3 and above, to enhance the potential to produce a clean and simple factor structure (removed items are presented in Table 4.6).

Table 4.6. *Items removed due to low loadings*

Removed Items	
12e	When I finish work for the day I am too tired to do anything else
12f	I am confident that I have enough time to do my job to the best of my ability
12g	I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work
12h	Members of my team are willing to go the extra mile to meet my supervisor/manager's work goals
12i	My manager always has a return to work meeting with me after I have been off sick to ensure I am fit to be back at work
13c	I often go into work when I am ill and know I should really stay at home
13d	I sometimes feel that there is little team support in my department
13f	Some people get recognised more than others in this organisation
14c	I have achievable deadlines
14d	It's up to me if I want to work overtime/longer hours
14e	My job adds no value to others

14g	I trust my colleagues
15a	My supervisor/manager expects me to work more than 40 hours per week
15e	I understand what is expected of me at work
15h	If I was really unhappy at work I would leave my job without necessarily having another job to go to
15j	My supervisor/manager is key to the performance of my team
16b	There is a friendly working atmosphere within the organisation
16f	My work is the most important thing in my life
16g	I am confident I could continue working at my current pace until retirement
17b	I would leave my current job if another offer was made to me even if it was not necessarily a better job
17e	My organisation would do everything possible to help me return to work if I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks)
17i	I often feel that I am not treated fairly compared with my colleagues
18a	If I take time off I worry about letting others down
18b	If I under-perform at work my supervisor/manager is quick to point it out
18h	I believe that my job is valuable to people both within and external to the organisation I work in
19a	It is not easy to get time off to run personal errands
19b	This organisation offers a fair days work for a fair days pay
19g	I feel able to voice my opinions and influence change in my area of work
19h	There is good team spirit in my department
20d	I feel I often have to work faster than I would like in order to get all my work done
20g	My supervisor/manager treats people fairly
20h	I am not interested in being promoted to a higher grade
20i	I am given good feedback on the work I do
20j	I have very little control over the amount of work I have to do each day
21a	There are enough staff that I can take annual leave when I choose to
21c	The good team spirit in my department improves my quality of working life
21e	I have very little control over the speed at which I work
21f	If I under-perform at work my supervisor/manager will make an example of me in front of the people I work with
21h	I worry that if something goes wrong at work I will be blamed for it
21i	I have other jobs options open to me, but choose not to take them at this time
21j	Often I can't sleep at night because I am thinking about work

22a	I would only leave my current job if a better offer came up
22c	I feel able to openly express my opinions about work when I'm at work
22f	I would like to work less hours
22g	The friendly working environment in my department makes me want to come to work
22i	I am worried that if I take time off sick I might lose my job
23i	I feel under pressure to go to work even when I am ill
24c	I have clear goals that enable me to do my job effectively
24f	If I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks) I feel confident that my organisation would support me
24g	I am confident the organisation will support me in difficult times

4.3.1.3 Treatment of Cross Loading Items

Items that loaded onto more than one factor were considered on a case-by-case basis. Each was judged in terms of its loading onto the factor and the face validity of its fit with the semantics of the other items loading onto the respective factor. In such instances, the author assessed which factor each cross-loading item should be assigned to. In an attempt to reduce subjectivity, these were then checked with the author's supervisor and any discrepancies discussed and agreed between the two. In most instances items were assigned to the factor with the highest loading.

4.3.1.4 Treatment of Low Loading Items

Low loading items were considered on a case-by-case basis with those that did not possess strong face validity with the other constituent items being removed. Variables with a loading of less than 0.4 were either removed or considered in relation to the factors on which they cross loaded.

Field (2000) suggests that a loading of greater than 0.3 is acceptable, while Stevens (2002) suggests that factor loading depends upon the sample size. Stevens' (2002) values are derived on the basis of a two-tailed alpha level of 0.1, which results in larger sample sizes requiring smaller factor loadings in order to be considered for retention. In the current study this would have required all variables to load onto factors with an absolute value greater than 0.298. Given that the factor loadings were generally high, a loading greater than 0.4 was set as the cut off point for inclusion, reflecting Field's recommendation. In most cases, the low loaders on one factor actually loaded at a higher level and had higher face validity on another factor and so

instead of completely excluding items, most were settled in the factor grouping that possessed the strongest/most intuitive fit in terms of face validity.

4.3.1.5 Factor Extraction and Rotation

An initial Exploratory Factor Analysis, suppressing items with a coefficient of < 0.3 extracted 23 factors (see Appendix I for Rotated Component Matrix) with Eigenvalues >1, accounting for 68.75% of the total variance explained. The first two factors to emerge were considerably larger than the remaining 21 factors, with Factor 1 comprised of 54 items, and Factor 2 comprised of 51 items, between them accounting for 26% of the total variance. In 11 of the factors extracted, three or fewer items loaded onto the factor, with three items per factor considered the absolute minimum required (Costello and Osborne, 2005; Raubenheimer, 2004). Furthermore, in view of claims that extraction methods based on Eigenvalues >1 tend to overestimate the number of factors (Costello and Osborne, 2005), attention turned to an examination of the Scree Plot (see Appendix J) to provide an indication of the optimum number of factors to extract in order to obtain a simple factor structure (Costello and Osbourne, 2005). In response to the initial EFA, 50 low loading items (<0.3, see Costello and Osbourne, 2005) were removed to allow a potentially 'cleaner' factor structure to emerge from the 77 remaining items (See Table 4.6).

Reference to the Scree Plot (see Appendix J) derived from the un-rotated matrix, indicated that between six and eight components were present, there being a marked 'step down' beyond this point. However, the analysis was first run with a forced solution of 14 factors to explore the degree to which the resulting factors might relate to the 14 themes and sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3). Both Orthogonal (Varimax) and Oblique (Direct Oblimen) rotations were conducted (see Appendix K for 14 Factor Oblimen Rotation Pattern Matrix), both of which returned factor structures that accounted for a total percentage variance of 58.37. With the objective of deriving a simple, interpretable orthogonal structure, a Varimax rotation was applied (see Ferguson and Cox, 1993; Field, 2000). However, only 10 of the 14 factors extracted had more than 3 items loading on them, so a factor structure with 14 clear factors did not emerge. Given that 10 of the factors had more than 3 items loading on them, a forced 10 factor solution was performed. This accounted for 65.19% of the total variance, with almost 40% of this accounted for by the first three factors (see Appendix L for a copy of Rotated Component Matrix). Furthermore, a high number of items loaded onto the first three factors (35, 34 and 29 respectively) with the remaining factors comprised of between five and nine items. Given that the aim of the EFA was to produce a simple factor structure and in reference to the

Scree Plot which had indicated an optimum number of between six and eight factors, further forced factor extractions were conducted.

The results indicated that a six factor solution would be optimum, so a Monte Carlo Parallel Analysis was conducted to assess the accuracy of this interpretation of the Scree Plot. Monte Carlo Parallel Analysis may be used where a large sample has been obtained (Field, 2000) and given that the minimum recommended number of respondents to items had been exceeded in this particular case (see Table 4.5) the sample size was considered sufficient. The Monte Carlo test supported the interpretation of the Scree Plot, showing lower EFA Eigenvalues than those generated by the Monte Carlo Parallel Analysis, indicating that six factors should be retained (see Table 4.7). This culminated in an optimum forced solution of six factors accounting for 58.4% of the variance (see Appendix M. for a copy of the Rotated Component Matrix).

Table 4.7. *Monte Carlo Parallel Analysis Output*

Factor	**Eigen Value from PCA**	**Parallel Analysis Criterion Value**	**Decision**
Factor 1	29.246	1.9559	Accept
Factor 2	4.856	1.8814	Accept
Factor 3	3.364	1.8296	Accept
Factor 4	3.173	1.7807	Accept
Factor 5	2.297	1.7400	Accept
Factor 6	2.009	1.7030	Accept
Factor 7	1.515	1.6656	Decline
Factor 8	1.385	1.6314	Decline
Factor 9	1.234	1.6006	Decline
Factor 10	1.117	1.5671	Decline

Following a number of iterations, a forced six factor solution produced a result with high face validity that accounted for a high proportion (58.4%) of the total variance (see Table 4.8).

Appendix N presents the six factors, item loadings and the titles ascribed to each. Items asterisked were high cross loaders, and have been assigned to the Factor representing the higher loading, or the stronger face validity.

Table 4.8. *Factors Identified by Forced 6 Factor Solution*

Factor	Loading from Varimax Rotation	
	% Variance	Cumulative %
Factor 1	16.675	16.675
Factor 2	15.580	32.255
Factor 3	10.595	42.850
Factor 4	7.294	50.143
Factor 5	4.432	54.575
Factor 6	3.794	58.370

4.4 Factor Naming Discussion of Constructs

4.4.1 Factor 1 – Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment

Items grouped within this factor appeared to relate to employee perceptions of employer practice, not just in some absolute sense, but with regard to social comparisons relating to the treatment of peers. A strong theme within this factor related to perceptions of fairness and equity, e.g. the extent to which an organisation consistently responds to good or poor employee performance; awarding promotion and offering praise or reward. The inverse of this was also reflected in the item set by statements relating to good performance going unrecognised. Issues of social comparison were central to this; specifically that reward should be related to effort, ascribed to those who 'deserve' it. The presence of items relating to trust had intuitive linkages to fairness and equity, in the sense that the organisation/its managers apply recognition and reward criteria in a manner that does not embody favouritism and bias. The apparent linkage with items relating to involvement and engagement seemed to reflect linkages with previously identified components of trust, notably openness and transparency. The items grouped into this factor were therefore considered to represent four of the Study 1 themes: *Investment in Staff* (12b; 18d; 21d; 24e; 14b; 22e; 12c; 19e); *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment* (15c; 18j; 23d; 23h; 23j; 19c; 20f; 23f); *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff* (16h; 17d; 21g; 23a; 24d) and *Perceived Organisational Support* (16c; 17a; 20b; 22b). Table 4.9 presents the items listed against the relevant Study 1 theme and sub-theme(s).

4.4.1.1 Cross Loading Items

There were ten high cross loading items within this factor, three of these cross loaded with Factor 3; item 12c *'If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation',* item 14b *'When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it'* and, item 19e *'This organisation promotes staff who work hard'.* These items were ascribed to Factor 1 on the grounds of stronger face validity, reinforced by their relatively higher loading.

4.4.1.2 Discussion of Constituent Facets

Items were considered in relation to findings from Study 1 (see Chapter 3), in order to assess the degree of (dis)parity. Table 4.9 shows the Study 1 themes and sub-themes, as well as the items arising from the sub-themes included in Factor 1 (following removal of cross loaders and low loaders). Themes relating to *Investment in Staff*; *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment*; *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff* and *Perceived Organisational Support* were all reflected in the items that loaded onto Factor 1.

Table 4.9. *Final Items in Factor 1 –Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment that relate to the Themes and Sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3).*

Study 1 Theme	**Study 1 Sub-theme**	**Items from Study 1 themes that loaded onto Factor 1 (Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment)**
Investment in Staff	Non-Financial Rewards	The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me
		The company does not seem to reward hard work
		This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile
		If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised
		When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it
		No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation
	Career Progression Opportunities	If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation
		This organisation promotes staff who work hard
Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment	Peer / Social Comparison	Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort
		A significant number of people don't pull their weight in

		this organisation Some people get away with a lot in this organisation I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation The organisation treats its staff fairly
Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff	Involvement and Engagement	Changes at work are often made without staff having a say in them I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me Staff are always consulted about change at work I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work
Perceived Organisational Support	Employee Perceptions of Support from the Organisation	The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life I have confidence in the way the organisation is run I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees

4.4.1.3 Investment in Staff

Investment in Staff (a theme from Study 1) includes two sub-themes – *Non-Financial Rewards* and *Career Progression Opportunities*. Recognition of employee effort (by managers and the organisation) and the need for reward (non-financial and in terms of career progression opportunities specifically) were represented in the items loading onto Factor 1. There were intuitive linkages here with a sense of self-esteem and self-worth. Also apparent, were elements that linked to issues of social comparison and fairness/equity, i.e. perceptions of how the organisation manages reward in relation to good or bad performance. In this regard, what seems

to be important to employees is that where effort is expended it is recognised and appreciated. Study 1 findings highlighted the role of non-financial/discretionary rewards in employee QoWL, where meaningful rewards were cited as being particularly powerful, and this would appear to be supported and reflected in this first Factor to emerge.

Reflecting on insights from Study 1, there was some suggestion that there may be differences in terms of profession/occupation with respect to the value placed upon reward, by type. For example, members of the cohort of Recruitment Consultants seemed to place higher value on monetary reward, with recognition being a secondary consideration. By contrast, Ambulance and Fire Service employees, as well as the teacher interviewed were more focussed on praise and normative feedback for a job well done and, recognition of the worth and skill they bring to their roles.

Broadly, the themes emergent in Study 1 were evident in the current Study Factors, with the notable exception of Quality of Peer Relationships, which did not emerge as a Factor in the Factor Structure. This was surprising in light of the discussions relating to the importance of peer relationships in Study 1, but may be reflective purely of respondent's perspective on their own experience of QoWL at an individualistic level, rather than in relation to their peers and work groups.

4.4.1.4 Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment

Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment (a theme to emerge from Study 1) highlights perceptions of being treated in a fair and equitable way, i.e. in some degree via *Peer/Social Comparison* but also referenced to intrinsic sense of effort-reward balance. The items that are reflected in Factor 1 also embody employees' sense of procedural and social justice; as well as issues of social comparison. The perceived fairness of treatment and access to opportunity, compared with one's colleagues, emerged in Study 1 as a running thread in relation to reward and recognition, access to training, working hours and breaks, and access to resources.

4.4.1.5 Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff

Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff emerged as a theme in Study 1. Constituent items appear to relate to the extent and quality of communication in relation to *Involvement and Engagement* with employees over issues that affect them. It embodies issues of staff involvement in change, trust at local and organisational levels, openness and altruism. Study 1 findings relating to communication highlighted the positive impact of employees

feeling that they were listened to, and that management are approachable. However more typically, respondents characterised communication as being a one-way process. Fire and Paramedic Service employees, for example, portrayed a world in which new policy comes from their management with no engagement or prior consultation with those most directly affected.

4.4.1.6Perceived Organisational Support

Intuitively linked with the above facets of this Factor 1, *Perceived Organisational Support* (a theme from Study 1) embodies perceptions of trust in the organisation and support from it. A key thread running through this facet being effective communication, an essential ingredient in the development of trusting and supportive workplace relationships. The sub-theme, *Perceived Organisational Support* emerged in Study 1 relating to respondents' accounts of the degree to which they felt the organisation would support them. Perspectives here were varied with Recruitment Consultants expressing high trust in their organisation and high *Perceived Organisational Support,* while Ambulance and Fire Service respondents expressed low *Perceived Organisational Support,* representing the two extremes.

4.4.1.7 Factor 1 - Fit with Published Findings

Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment incorporated variables relating to fair treatment, trust, equity, recognition of effort expended, consultation and engagement. In his book *A Great Place to Work: What Makes Some Employers so Good (and Most so Bad)* Levering (1988) summarises the key aspects of good companies on the basis of interviews across a large sample of companies in North America. Incorporated in the factor he defined as *Trust,* Levering includes *Credibility* (of management), *Respect* (for employee worth) and *Fairness* (in relation to equitable treatment of employees), which seem to be reflected by this first factor and are also highlighted by Shore and Shore (1995) within the context of organisational justice as being key in increasing employee sense of Perceived Organisational Support (POS).

The role of reward and recognition in employee motivation is evident in the literature, with research indicating a significant, positive relationship between rewards and work satisfaction and motivation (Ali and Ahmed, 2009). Furthermore, employee engagement has been identified as "a critical driver in business success" (Lockwood, 2007; p2) and reward and recognition is cited as a contributing factor in achieving greater employee engagement. Reward and recognition can also take the form of promotion/progression opportunities, with clarity and visibility of career trajectories emerging as an important aspect of QoWL in Study 1, as well the

literature, with links to employee retention and engagement indicated as positive outcomes of "prospects for future growth with one's employer" (Lockwood, 2007; p7). This reinforces the importance of clear goals and opportunities for career progression.

Published findings indicate that rewards that are perceived by employees as being discretionary on the part of the organisation are interpreted as a symbol of recognition, appreciation and investment from the organisation. Causal linkages are also reported with regard to Perceived Organisational Support (POS) (Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Shore, 1995). Study 1 findings indicated that rewards seem to be of highest value when the employee perceives them to be particularly relevant to them, which could be interpreted as supportive of the findings cited above, with regards to perceptions of rewards being discretionary rather than being generic and handed out as a matter of course, thus reducing their perceived 'value'. Research suggests that recognition, especially from high level management, is often perceived as a valuable reward (Wayne *et al.* 2002) and this is enhanced when communication from management is valued by employees and perceived to be sincere (Allen, 1992).

By volume, the greatest contribution of research in relation to reward focuses on financial reward and incentives. This was not a prominent feature employee accounts in of Study 1, neither is it strong feature within Study 2 findings. However, in Study 1 its salience did appear to vary across the sample. Monetary reward was notably more prevalent in Recruitment Consultant accounts. It seems possible that this amplified profile may reflect the nature of reward arrangements, notably the strong relationship between performance results and financial reward.

Reward and recognition has been explored from the perspective of pay in a number of studies (see, for example; Bishop, 1987; Hashimoto and Yu, 1980; Kohn, 1993) with conflicting results, but little exploration of other methods of reward and recognition in relation to QoWL have been conducted, leaving a considerable deficit in the literature. In consideration of the findings of the Study 2a analysis combined with the comments made in the previous qualitative study (Chapter 3; Study 1), it would appear that the value of a reward to the employee depends upon the type of reward offered and as such is not limited to pay alone. The same principle would seem to be apparent on evaluation of the impact of recognition when considered in the context of the findings of the previous qualitative study, with a simple 'thank you' for a job well done acting as a motivator for many, while references to pay were minimal, a finding supported by Allen (1992). Considering the emergence of this sub-theme in the current study in conjunction with those of the previous qualitative study would seem to suggest that to accept

pay as the only method of reward and recognition relevant to the employee could lead the employer to disregard other, potentially more salient reward and recognition options.

Perceptions of fairness and equity were core components of the variables making up this factor. This echoed sentiments expressed by participants in Study 1. Fair treatment – or procedural and distributive justice – have been shown to be significantly related to Perceived Organisational Support (Fasolo, 1995; Wayne *et al.* 2002). Perceptions of fairness are said to be enhanced when employees have good access to meaningful communication channels within the organisation and are engaged in the development of procedures and where there are clear procedures in place to mediate situations where not all employees can "win" e.g. via a promotion or job opening whereby not all qualified applicants will get the role. Engagement of staff is reported to be key in such situations and to play an important role in promoting employee perceptions of fairness in general (Hakenen *et al.* 2006; Llorens *et al.* 2006, Mauno *et al.* 2007, Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Furthermore, where an employee feels they are treated fairly by the organisation, they are more inclined to put extra effort into their work (Puffer, 1987). This fairness is rated by employees on the basis of how appropriate they perceive their organisations' procedures to be and how 'right' they think their interactions and the related outcomes of such interactions, with the organisation are (Greenberg, 1990). In customer facing roles it is further suggested that employees will better serve the customer if they feel they themselves are treated fairly by the organisation (Schneider and Bowen, 1992).

Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment has been explored in relation to employee's perception they are treated equitably with their colleagues (interactional justice) and in relation to the organisation's formal systems and procedures being perceived as fair (procedural justice). According to Bies and Moag (1986) perceptions of interactional justice will most likely influence an individual's behaviour towards the person involved, while procedural justice perceptions will influence how the individual reacts to the organisation. The two forms of 'justice' are often presented as related aspects of organisational fairness as a whole (e.g. Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997; Tyler and Bies, 1990). Masterson *et al.*'s (2000) examination of evidence relating to procedural and interactional justice leads them to suggest that procedural justice is a measure of fairness at the organisational level, while interactional justice is more likely a measure of how fair an employee perceives their supervisor to be.

Open communication has been associated with greater psychological well-being and health more generally (Lockwood, 2007); with a lack of *Involvement and Engagement* associated with increased turnover, sickness absence and employee stress (Lunt *et al.* 2007). Apparent through all of the facets of this first Factor is communication, without which employees cannot openly

express their preferred forms of reward and their own specific desires for progression, whilst managers cannot positively reinforce good working practice and excellence. Fair treatment cannot be achieved if open communication is not accepted practice; as concerns, ideas and opportunities will be missed and employees may feel inhibited such that they may be unable to 'speak up' when something is bothering them. Without good communication employees will likely feel distant from the organisation more widely, reducing perceptions of POS and trust.

Furthermore research by Wayne *et al.* (2002) found that employee recognition and inclusion in decision making by senior management predicts POS. This aspect of QoWL has been associated with increased job satisfaction and improved performance (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), as well as intention to quit (Vandenberghe, 2004). The facets incorporated in this first Factor appear to broadly mirror those of Levering's (1988) factor *Trust* and, are highlighted by Shore and Shore (1995) as important in relation to employee sense of POS, mirroring perceptions emergent in the Study 1 theme.

4.4.2 Factor 2 – Leader-Member Exchange

This factor relates to employees' relationship with their immediate line manager and its apparent salience echoes sentiments expressed in Study 1 relating to relationships with supervisors and line-managers. Specifically, items relate to supervisor/manager recognition of potential and good work and fair treatment compared with peers, with regard to their expectations of what employees can achieve in a working day; and more broadly, the degree of trust employees have in their supervisor/manager, as well as the degree to which they feel supported. As the second factor to emerge, its relative primacy appears to reflect conclusions drawn from Study 1. This Factor presents a mapping onto four of the Study 1 themes: *Investment in Staff* (13e; 17h; 19i); *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment* (20g; 19d); *Job Demands/Workload* (18i; 18g); and *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff* (12a; 13a; 13g; 14h; 16a; 20c; 22j; 19j; 21b; 17c; 22h).

The facets within this Factor appear to be closely related in terms of their scope. They also appear to complement elements present in Factor 1. The apparently discrete, but seemingly closely coupled themes apparent between Factors 1 and 2 might be considered particularly salient given that they account for almost one third of the total variance.

4.4.2.1 Cross Loading Items

There were four cross loading items, and of these, two items (13e *'My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential'* and 18g '*My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it'*) had higher factor loadings for Factor 2 than the alternatives and were judged to have a stronger face validity fit within this Factor. Of the remaining items, 15f *'My manager/supervisor encourages me to develop new skills'* loaded at a higher level onto Factor 3 and was a better fit with that group and hence was moved, whilst item 20a *'I am happy in my current job*' loaded with Factors 3 and 5 but had the highest factor loading and was judged as having higher face validity with other items in Factor 5.

4.4.2.2 Discussion of Constituent Facets

Table 4.10 shows the Study 1 themes and sub-themes alongside the items included in Factor 2. Components relating to the Study 1 headline themes of *Investment in Staff*; *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment*; *Job Demands/Workload;* and *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement of Staff* are all reflected in this second Factor.

4.4.2.3 Investment and staff

This facet relates to supervisors/line-managers expressing their recognition of employee effort, performance and potential. This component of *Leader-Member Exchange* strongly echoes Study 1 findings, although a notable difference relates to focus, i.e. in Study 1 the employee accounts relating to *Feedback and Praise* tended to be focussed more generally at the organisational, rather than supervisory/line-management level.

4.4.2.4 Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment

This facet of Factor 2 is interpreted as relating to issues of *Peer/Social Comparison* and highlights the importance of employee trust and respect in their line-managers to treat team members in a fair and consistent manner. This facet was reflected in Study 1 comments that *"if your face fits"* you get preferential treatment.

Table 4.10. *Items from Factor 2 – Leader-Member Exchange related to the Themes and Sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3)*

Study 1 Theme	**Study 1 Sub-theme**	**Items from Study 1 themes that loaded onto Factor 2 (Leader-Member Exchange)**
Investment in Staff	Feedback and Praise	My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential
		When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager
		My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work
Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment	Peer / Social Comparison	My supervisor/manager treats people fairly
		My supervisor/manager is consistent in his/her approach to dealing with staff
Job Demands / Workload	Expectations	My supervisor/manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work
	Time Pressure	My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it
Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff	Quality of the Relationship between Manager / Supervisor and Employee	My superior/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake
		Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job
		We can trust our supervisor/manager
		People in my team respect my supervisor/manager
		My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right
		My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team
		I trust my line manager to keep confidences
		My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job
		My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does
		My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job
		My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team

4.4.2.5 Job Demands/Workload

This facet of Factor 2 presents as reflecting the Study 1 sub-themes of *Expectations* and *Time Pressure*. Expectations relate to the degree to which line managers understand the role his/her employee fulfils and the demands on them in their day-to-day work. While expectations can appear to be organisationally set, a lack of challenge of these expectations at the supervisory/line-management level might be interpreted as condoning/supporting the expectation at the front line. Communication is key in such instances so that clarification of expectations can be achieved.

4.4.2.6 Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff

Eleven of the items loading onto Factor 2 reflect the Study 1 sub-theme *Quality of the Relationship between Manager/Supervisor and Employee.* A notable feature is that exchange presents as relating to elements beyond issues of communication, to issues of line-manager/supervisor support and preparedness to engage with employee perspectives. As such, the construct might be interpreted as implying that exchange relates to broader aspects of superior-subordinate relationships. Further linkages seem apparent with issues of leader-member trust.

4.4.2.7 Factor 2 - Fit with Published Findings

The second factor to emerge, *Leader-Member Exchange* (LMX), seems to complement elements of Factor 1 but is more closely focused on direct interaction between the immediate (line) manager and employee. This factor encompasses issues of respect and a perception by employees that their Supervisor/Manager cares about their well-being and has an appreciation of what they do. According to Wayne and Green, LMX relates to the "type of exchange [which] develops between a supervisor and subordinate. These exchanges range from low to high quality" (1993; p. 1431). The quality of relationship between supervisor and subordinate will vary across individuals, but each relationship is prone to remain relatively stable over time. Several Study 1 participants cited having had a poor relationship with their line manager as a key reason for having left past roles, and employee engagement (achieved in part through the employees relationship with their manager) has been cited as "a leading indicator of intent to stay within a given organisation" (Harter *et al.* 2002; p14).

Study 1 sentiments relating to supervisors/managers showing preferential treatment to some employees, *"if your face fits"* resulting in employees comparing their treatment with that of their peers. This facet links back to perceptions of interpersonal justice (Bies and Moag, 1986), whereby any perceived discrepancy in how one employee is treated, as compared with another, creates a sense of dissatisfaction. Fair treatment relies upon good communication to enable employee concerns, wants and desires to be clearly expressed and management expectations to be espoused so that any discrepancies between the two can be managed.

Past research has identified a number of phenomena said to characterise the quality of *Leader-Member Exchange*. Graen and Scandura (1987) and Wakabayashi and Graen (1984) found that LMX can be related to employee career progression. Other research has found positive LMX to be negatively associated with intention to quit (Graen *et al.* 1982; Vecchio, 1982; 1985) and with stronger organisational commitment (Nystrom, 1990). Wayne and Green (1993) describe LMX in terms of social exchange, whereby one member may deliver a service to another without the need for 'payment' or reward. However, this act does create an obligation on the receiving party to reciprocate at some point in the future. The exchange functions, not on the basis of any contract but, on trust and obligation between the parties involved.

A number of respondents in Study 1 described having a good relationship with their line-manager but little regard for the organisation as a whole – this was particularly evident in the case of the Ambulance Service workers, a number of whom described having a good relationship with their immediate manager but little trust in higher management within the organisation. This employee-line manager relationship appears to mediate the impact of low organisational trust. At the employee-supervisor level, Study 1 respondents discussed *Time Pressure* in relation to the expectations of managers/supervisors who, it was claimed, lacked understanding of the challenges faced by employees at the front line. Particularly prevalent in the Paramedic and Fire Service participants, accounts here related to a drive to meet Key Performance Indicator's that were claimed to fail to take into account the realities of doing the job. This perceived lack of supervisor/manager support in response to unrealistic demands was cited as a source of stress.

Stringer (2006) explored the impact of the employee-supervisor relationship on employee job satisfaction and concluded that "when employees have a high quality relationship with their supervisor they get to enjoy the benefits of favours such as mutual trust, support from their supervisor, effective communication, consideration, and esteem; and consequently, they more likely will be satisfied with their job, accomplish more, and help their organization to prosper" (Stringer, 2006; p136). Indeed, *Leader-Member Exchange* has been found to correlate positively with employee satisfaction (Graen *et al.* 1982; Green *et al.* 1996; Gerstner and Day, 1997) and with job performance ratings in a number of studies (Borman *et al.* 1995; Dansereau *et al.* 1982; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Gerstner and Day, 1997; Green *et al.* 1996; Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999; Liden *et al.* 1997; Liden *et al.* 1993; Settoon *et al.* 1996).

Janssen and Van Yperen (2004) found that poor quality LMX is associated with lower job performance ratings and lower job satisfaction, whilst Basu and Green (1997) and Scott and Bruce (1994) found good LMX to be predictive of greater job role innovation. Gerstner and Day (1997) found a number of significant positive correlations relating LMX to employee performance, satisfaction with supervision, overall job satisfaction, organisational commitment, clarity of role and significant negative correlations between LMX and intention to quit and role conflict. Comments made in Study 1 seem to support the research evidence that good LMX represents a core component of a positive workplace experience.

Leader-Member Exchange has been studied more extensively in past literature and seems to be fairly consistently linked to aspects of QoWL with no research refuting that it has an impact on an employee's experience of working life. Although there are differing views in relation to what and how far the impact of LMX reaches, ranging from its positive impact on employee satisfaction (e.g. Gerstner and Day, 1997) to job performance (e.g. Janssen and Van Yperen, 2004) and even job role innovation (e.g. Basu and Green, 1997). Published literature agrees that this factor is an important one, as reflected in it being the second most prevalent factor to emerge from the current research. While the facets of this Factor encompass four of the Study 1 themes, the common thread throughout is that of the quality of superior/subordinate relationship, defined in the literature as *Leader-Member Exchange*.

4.4.3 Factor 3 - Development, Investment and Training

Items loading onto this Factor relate to employee perceptions of the extent to which their employers invest in their futures. Facets include the availability of training and other personal development opportunities within the employing organisation, and embody specific reference to the role of line managers in encouraging and supporting this. The factor is comprised of thirteen items, which reflect alignment with two of the Study 1 themes: *Investment in Staff* (13b; 13j; 14a; 14j; 15f; 15b; 16d; 18c; 19f; 22d; 23e; 24b) and *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment (16e).*

4.4.3.1 Cross Loading Items

There were ten items in this factor that cross loaded. Of these, five were ascribed to this factor on the basis of the strength of their loading (15b *'I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation'*, 15f *'My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills'*, 18c *'There are no real career opportunities in this organisation'*, 22d *'There are good career progression opportunities open to me'* and 24b *'There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation'*). The six remaining cross-loaders had a higher loading on other factors and were considered to possess stronger face validity with these. Thus, for the purposes of construct measure development they were assigned to factors 1 and 2. Item 12c *'If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation'* cross loaded with factor 1 - *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* and fit more naturally with the grouping. Items 14b *'When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about It'* and 19e *'This organisation promotes staff who work hard'* also cross loaded at a higher level with factor 1 and also loaded higher on that factor. Item 17g *'This organisation does not invest in its staff'* also cross loaded with factor 1 and at a slightly higher level than it's loading with factor 3 (0.434 against 0.416) however, the character of the item was judged to fit more naturally with factor 3.

Item 13e *'My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential'* had a higher loading with factor 2 – Leader-Member Exchange and was considered to fit more closely with the theme of this factor, which relates to the relationship between manager and employee and as such was assigned to that factor.

4.4.3.2 Discussion of Constituent Facets

Table 4.11 shows the Study 1 themes and sub-themes alongside the items included in Factor 3 in the current study, resulting from the Factor Analysis (with any cross loading and low loading items removed). Elements relating to *Investment in Staff*; and *Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment*

are reflected in this third Factor, with the common thread *Communication* running through the item set.

The facets *Development, Investment & Training* reflect organisational level and manager-employee level references in terms of employees' perceptions of how much emphasis and resource the organisation invests in staff personal development training and career progression, as well as the role of line managers in supporting/facilitating this process.

Table 4.11. *Items from Factor 3 – Development, Investment & Training related to the Themes and Sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3)*

Study 1 Theme	**Study 1 Sub-theme**	**Items from Study 1 themes that loaded onto Factor 3 (Development, Investment and Training)**
Investment in Staff	Access to Training and Development Opportunities	I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers
		The company encourages me to develop new skills
		I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs
		There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation
		My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills
	Career Progression Opportunities	I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation
		I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation
		There are no real career opportunities in this organisation
		My supervisor/manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place
		There are good career progression opportunities open to me
		I have regular meetings with me supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression
		There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation
Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment	Peer / Social Comparison	I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair

4.4.3.3 Investment in Staff

Presence of items that make specific reference to training opportunities are of close concordance with the Study 1 sub-theme *Access to Training and Development Opportunities*. The accounts of Study 1 participants highlighted the importance of training, but also the *right* training, given in the *right* way. For Study 1 participants this meant training that was meaningful to them, offered professional development and competence, as delivered in an engaging and interactive way.

The close coupling of items relating to *Progression Opportunities* with those that make reference is not surprising, given the relationship between skills acquisition and employment prospects to training, in that progressing within any organisation likely requires learning new skills. *Career Progression Opportunities* was raised in most of the Study 1 focus groups and one-to-one interviews with the focus of the discussions emphasising clarity of progression paths and ease/fairness of access to progression opportunities. Autonomy and control over progression was raised as a positive contributor to QoWL in the group of Recruitment Consultants, who expressed feeling motivated at being masters of their destiny with regards their progression. *Career progression Opportunities* were cited by a number of Study 1 respondents as an influencing factor in their decision to stay with, or leave an organisation. The occurrence of items relating to career progression, alongside items relating to training and development, within the current context, might indicate that career progression is perceived by employees as a form of *Investment in Staff.*

The quality and planning of training and the clarity of career progression trajectories both rely on good quality communication in order that employees can develop a clear strategy, in collaboration with their line manager, as to how to prioritise relevant training and achieve their career goals.

4.4.3.4 Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment

A single item within this Factor related to perceptions of fairness regarding access to training opportunities. It reflects alignment with the Study 1 sub-theme *Peer/Social Comparison*. This item reflects employee perceptions of fair treatment in relation to their peers with regards access to training and development. It is perhaps unsurprising that perceptions of Access to *Training and Development Opportunities* are referenced in comparison with peer experiences. Perceptions of injustice in relation to fair access to training might conceivably result in intention

to quit and reduced employee commitment to their supervisor, should they perceive that their supervisor is showing preferential treatment to some employees in relation to access to training.

4.4.3.5 Factor 3 - Fit with published findings

Factor 3, *Training, Development and Career Progression* is considered to complement Factors 1 and 2 in that it embodies intuitive linkages to *Reward and Recognition,* in so far as career progression and development opportunities could be considered as rewards to those employees who seek advancement. Complementary links with *Leader-Member Exchange* also seem apparent in items that make reference to employee perceptions of the extent to which their manager supports them in working towards/planning their career progression and facilitating their access to training and development opportunities. This is supported by research cited above, linking good LMX to better career progression prospects (Graen and Scandura, 1987; Wakabayashi and Graen, 1984).

In their review, Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) cite Goldstein and Ford's (2002) definition of training as "a systematic approach to learning and development to improve individual, team, and organizational effectiveness" (p452) and define development as "activities leading to the acquisition of new knowledge or skills for purposes of personal growth" (p452). The meaning of training and development in the context of this Factor appears to reflect close alignment with this definition.

The relationship between progression prospects and the employee-supervisor relationship has been explored to a limited degree in the literature with findings indicating that supervisor perceptions of employee career progression prospects do influence employee satisfaction (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992). Furthermore, employee perceptions of their own self advancement prospects also appear to have an impact on their performance and job satisfaction (Cougar, 1988; Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992; Luca, 1989).

In his research *'One more reason not to cut your training budget',* Owens (2006) explores the relationship between training and organisational outcomes in terms of job satisfaction, turnover and organisational justice in an attempt to link training to organisational outcomes. Owens hypothesises that training could act as a mediator and as such will result in higher reported levels of job satisfaction, lower turnover cognitions, perceptions of organisational justice and increased job performance; findings presented broadly in the literature (e.g. Gerstner and Day, 1997; Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Shore and Shore, 1995; Wayne *et al.* 2002). Owens' findings suggest that training is linked to these three factors and, as

a result, has a positive impact on employee performance, although he does recognise that other potential contributory variables cannot be ruled out (Owens, 2006).

In their exploration of training and job satisfaction of franchise employees, Choo and Bowley (2007) found that employees experience greater job satisfaction when they are offered good training and development opportunities delivered by experienced and knowledgeable trainers. This sentiment was expressed by a number of respondents in Study 1, across a range of organisations. The method of training was also commented upon, with an engaging and interesting style of training being quoted as key to achieving learning outcomes. A further finding cited by these authors is that employees develop more positive feelings towards their employer and their colleagues when they experience what they consider to be effective training with positive learning outcomes.

Pugh (1984) and Thomas *et al.* (2000) suggest that when an organisation's employees are satisfied with the training they receive and are generally satisfied in their jobs, turnover rates are lower. Organisations have been shown to benefit from more knowledgeable, motivated employees who are able to share their skill sets and support team members (Pate and Martin, 2000) and, who show higher levels of professionalism and commitment to the organisation (Bushardt and Fretwell, 1994).

Closely linked to *Training and Development Opportunities*, variables relating to *Career Progression* emerged as an integral aspect of this Factor. While Rice *et al.* (1989) found promotion opportunities to be one aspect detrimental to job satisfaction if not fulfilled. This was reinforced by findings from Study 1 of the current research. Career progression planning represented a notable focus of the items loading on this factor. Moreover, Study 1 findings indicated that clarity and visibility of opportunity is of central importance. While the paramedics, technicians and fire fighters expressed views pertaining to a largely audit driven approach to career progression where opportunities were available more on the basis of exam success than on the job competence, the Recruitment Consultants interviewed expressed a sense of a high degree of autonomy and control over their career progression.

While the past literature explores the relationship between career progression and job satisfaction (see, for example; Choo and Bowley, 2007; Pugh, 1984; Thomas *et al.* 2000), relatively few studies have expressly explored the relationship between career progression and QoWL. However, there are claims that changes in the economic, social and political landscape are reflected in changes in employee expectations from work. For example, it has been suggested that in earlier epochs employees placed higher value on job security (Sullivan, 1999), whereas contemporary employees are said to be more disposed to trade their in-role

performance for continuous learning in an effort to maintain and enhance their marketability (Rousseau, 1989). The implication of this is that organisations seeking to reduce turnover need to consider the changing desires of employees over time, and not just assume that what was desirable to previous generations of employees remains so within current cohorts. In light of the fact that respondents from all organisations interviewed in the course of Study 1 expressed the view that people do leave organisations if they do not feel the progression opportunities are there for them, it would appear this is now regarded by employees as an important aspect of QoWL.

The published findings discussed above would seem to support the findings of the current Study and of Study 1 in highlighting the importance of training and development in contributing to employee perceptions of QoWL. This construct embodies intuitive linkage and, appears to complement Factor 2 and 3, in so far as training and career development opportunities could be viewed as a form of reward.

Training, Development and Career Progression has received less attention in past literature, with very little relating it to aspects of employee QoWL. This facet of QoWL is clearly an important one, as indicated by discussion relating to it through Study 1, and it's emergence in the current Study. In addition, good quality training that is well delivered has been associated with increased job satisfaction (Choo and Bowley, 2007) and this was also a theme running through Study 1, and reflected again in this current Study. However, in light of the links between training and job satisfaction, turnover (Pugh, 1984; Thomas *et al.* 2000), performance and perceptions of organisational justice, as presented in the literature (e.g. Owens, 2006), it seems that the emergence of this factor in the current research is an important one. More recent research by Choo and Bowley (2007) also supports the notion that training and progression opportunities are important to enhancing aspects of QoWL, and this would seem to be an area that warrants further investigation.

4.4.4 Factor 4 – Flexibility

Factor 4 is considered to reflect the degree to which employees perceive they can vary their working hours, take time off for personal appointments, fulfil caring responsibilities etc. and exercise autonomy over how they organise their work within their working day. Eight items loaded on this factor, aligned with the Study 1 theme *Job Demands/Workload* (20e; 17f; 14i; 15d; 15i; 18f; 23b; 23g), indicating high parity between the Study 1 theme and the emergent Factor.

4.4.4.1 Cross Loading Items

There was only one cross loading item in factor 4. Item 18g 'My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it' cross loaded with factor 2 'Leader-Member Exchange' and had a higher loading against this factor. In terms of face validity, it was judged that this item was more natural within factor 2.

Table 4.12. *Items from Factor 4 – Flexibility related to the Themes and Sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3)*

Study 1 Theme	**Study 1 Sub-theme**	**Items from Study 1 themes that loaded onto Factor 4 (Flexibility)**
Job Demands / Workload	Flexibility & Choice	The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work
		I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments
		I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work
		I can work flexi time when I choose
		My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment
		I can plan my working day
		I have a lot of choice over how I organise my working day
		There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work

4.4.4.2 Discussion of Constituent Facets

Table 4.12 shows the Study 1 themes and sub-themes alongside the items included in Factor 3. Elements relating to *Job Demands* were considered to be reflected in this forth Factor.

4.4.4.3 Job Demands/Workload

This Factor was judged to represent employee perceptions of the degree of *Flexibility and Choice* over organising their workload and managing their working day. This embodied the degree of autonomy over the organisation of tasks, flexibility over the configuration of working hours, as well as elements relating to the capacity to adjust work commitments to be of good fit

with non-work commitments. The scope for flexibility is subject to variability depending on job type, job status and employment sector. It is likely to be lowest amongst the low skilled and in traditional areas such as manufacturing; similarly, also in roles where work rate is dictated by external contingencies. This was apparent in the accounts provided by Paramedics and Fire Fighters in Study 1. A possible notable finding from Study 1 was that issues relating to flexibility were less prevalent in the accounts of respondents with the least scope for flexibility, i.e. Paramedics, Fire fights and Miners. Its salience appeared to be significantly greater amongst white collar workers. This would seem to imply that employee expectations and appreciation of the scope for flexibility may be an important consideration amongst this group of workers. Thus, it might be speculated that employee perspectives on flexibility are relative, such that, for example, any sense of frustration regarding its lack of/limited availability is referenced to perceptions of the scope for flexibility in a given job role.

The essence of this Factor presents as relating to *Flexibility & Choice* with regards to how much autonomy employees perceive they have in their ability to plan their workload and adjust their working hours to accommodate personal commitments, and reflects Study 1 findings closely. The majority of Study 1 respondents expressed the view that *Flexibility and Choice* would have a positive impact on their QoWL, with flexibility over working hours dominating their accounts. Those respondents who felt they did have autonomy to manage their own workload commented on it as a positive aspect of their working life, while a number of the recruitment consultant cohort commented that the dis-benefit of their role was the inflexible working hours, which made it difficult to accommodate personal appointments that could only be attended to during the week, with one respondent commenting that they had to take annual leave to attend doctor's appointments.

4.4.4.4 Factor 4 – Fit with Published Findings

At the heart of the fourth Factor, *Flexibility*, appear to be issues of autonomy and control. Specifically, the amount of control employees have in terms of managing their time; be that, their working hours or planning their day to best manage their workload. Autonomy is defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975) as "the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures used to carry it out" (p.162). This factor reflects the scheduling aspects of this definition focussing on the employee's autonomy in terms of when they put in their working hours and how they schedule their workload into these working hours.

Watson (1995) asserts that all employees must give up some degree of autonomy when they undertake paid work for others. Work, according to Watson (1995) 'makes use' of people in a manner advantageous to the organisation, and by simply turning-up, employees are likely sacrificing something they would rather be doing to fulfil their employment 'use'. The degree to which this loss of autonomy affects the individual can vary and, in some instances, can lead an employee to feel that the loss of autonomy is a slight against them personally. In such circumstances the result for the employee can become unbearable. Alternatively, extending greater autonomy to employees can result in increased engagement and trust (Cathcart *et al,* 2004).

Research conducted by Hill *et al.* (2001) discusses issues around flexible working as a remedy to avoiding the stressful rush hour commute and surmises that the "reduction in stress associated with the daily commute…may explain part of the favourable results [evident in their study] related to perceived job flexibility" (p.55) and can be particularly beneficial to parents, enabling them to schedule their working hours around the requirements of school-age children. Furthermore, flexible working hours and location may allow for greater use of the most productive hours for the employee who does not necessarily find the nine-to-five routine most industrious and for whom work demands peak and trough at different times of the year. This might also relate to the work organisation aspects of this factor in allowing employees to structure their work flexibly to accommodate these fluctuations in work demand to better meet deadlines and organisational objectives. Research by Hill *et al.* (1998) had indicated that flexible location had a beneficial impact on productivity, perceived morale and work/family balance. Other research suggests that enhanced flexibility could result in a number of benefits to families including reduced conflict, easier monitoring of children and lower rates of post birth depression in mothers (Bumpus *et al.* 1999; Crouter *et al.* 1999; Lindberg, 1996). There are also claims that desire for enhanced flexibility over flexible working arrangements, particularity working hours, increases with age (Hedges *et al.* 2009; Vickerstaff *et al.* 2008). Flexible working hours is also reflected in the literature as a positive in terms of QoWL, improving employee job satisfaction and reducing absenteeism (Baltes *et al.* 1999).

Differences have also been reported in terms of size of organisations. Galinsky *et al.* (2010), for example, report that small organisations (between 50-499 employees) tend to offer less flexibility in relation to working hours, than larger organisations. Plausibly this reflects limited scope for staff substitution. However, these authors report small organisations offering more flexibility than medium and large organisations in the areas of work schedule and transitions from full-time to part-time hours. This would seem to be supported by sentiments expressed by the Recruitment Consultants in Study 1. They worked for a small organisation (<150

employees) and had autonomy to structure their day as they pleased as long as they met client needs. However, they were given little or no flexibility in the hours they worked, and some commented that the office environment was very "controlled" even down to when they were permitted to take a break and the time of their lunch hour. Some of the consultants suggested that flexibility to come in late or leave early would be appreciated as a reward for good performance.

Instances whereby some members of staff (not all) were able to take advantage of flexible working, whether in terms of hours or location (but not in relation to how people managed their actual workload) was widely expressed as a source of dissatisfaction amongst Study 1 respondents. Perceptions of unfair treatment against their peers in relation to this aspect of working life seemed to elicit particularly strong feelings of dissatisfaction. De Cuyper and De Witte (2005) explored differences between temporary and permanent employees and found level of workload autonomy to have no significant effect on the job satisfaction and organisational commitment of temporary employees. Finn (2001) explored workload autonomy in nurses in Australia and found that their level of autonomy had a positive or negative effect on *Job Satisfaction*, where satisfaction increased with autonomy.

However, changes in the economic base in the UK mean that the proportion of the workforce engaged in such traditional activity is in significant decline. The proportion of employees engaged in activity where there is scope for flexible work arrangements is likely higher than at any time in the industrialised period as a result of increasing office-based roles and mobile technology (Hill *et al.* 1998). Additionally, the rise in the number of dual-earner families seems likely to sponsor higher employee demand for flexibility over how they organise their work (e.g. Chan and Margolin, 1994; Matthews *et al.* 2006; Westman and Etzion, 1995).

Flexibility in the context of the current research reflects employee ability to organise their work day and work load and exercise autonomy over these aspects of their working life. Watson's (2003) suggestion that loss of autonomy can make working life unbearable in some instances highlights the importance of this Factor. While the option to work flexibly has been associated with positive outcomes as commented above, too much flexibility has been implicated as having a detrimental effect in relation to maintaining effective communication, making it difficult for supervisors to supervise, and negatively impacting on performance. It would appear that flexibility within reasonable bounds, so as to enhance the positives and limit the potential negative impact, might be the most effective way to satisfy both employee and organisational needs. Accordingly, this appears to be recently reflected via changes to UK law with regard to flexible working, which entitles all employees to request flexible working, and demands that

organisations must consider all applications and can only refuse a request with good reason (see, ACAS.org.uk - http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/f/e/Code-of-Practice-on-handling-in-a-reasonable-manner-requests-to-work-flexibly.pdf; Gov.co.uk - https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working/overview, for more detail on flexible working policy).

Publicised findings indicate that greater flexibility of working hours, location and the trust implied by affording employees greater autonomy are generally advantageous and this is reflected in the emergence of this fourth Factor within the context of the current research. Whilst Watson (2003) highlights the potentially powerful impact of loss of flexibility, perhaps the reason for this factor not accounting for a higher percentage of the total variance might be attributed to the fact that some jobs simply cannot give the employee much flexibility/autonomy in respect of their having to work specific shift patterns, or at a particular location (Hill *et al.* 1998; Hill *et al.* 2001). This may mediate the strength of this factor, but should not be considered to lessen its potential importance in relation to aspects of QoWL for some employees, especially in light of the parity between this Factor and the Study 1 findings.

4.4.5 Factor 5 – Job Satisfaction

Items loading onto this fifth factor appear to relate to both intrinsic and extrinsic components of *Job Satisfaction*. Constituent facets present as peer relationships and support a sense of achievement through their work and commitment to the organisation. Three of the items aligned with the Study 1 themes *Quality of Peer Relationships* (12g) and *Intrinsic Job Satisfaction* (13h; 15g), with the remaining four items relating to what appear to be potential outcomes of *Job Satisfaction* in terms of their commitment to the organisation, happiness in their current role, and intention to quit (12j; 14f; 16j; 20a).

4.4.5.1 Cross Loading Items

There were two cross loading items 16j *'I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities'* and item 20a *'I am happy in my current job'*. Item 16j loaded to a lesser degree on Factor 1 - *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* - but was judged to be a better fit with Factor 5; it was therefore assigned to this construct. Item 20a also loaded to a lesser degree on Factor 1 and Factor 2, but was also judged to have stronger face validity with Factor 5.

Table 4.13. *Items from Factor 5 – Job Satisfaction related to the Themes and Sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3)*

Study 1 Theme	**Study 1 Sub-theme**	**Items from Study 1 themes that loaded onto Factor 5 (Job Satisfaction)**
Quality of Peer Relationships	Camaraderie	I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	Social Value from doing One's Job	Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction
		I get a sense of achievement from doing my job
Other	Intention to Quit	I have no intention of leaving my current employer
		I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities
	Commitment to Organisation	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation
		I am happy in my current job

4.4.5.2 Discussion of Constituent Facets

The facets that emerged within this Factor relate to elements of *Job Satisfaction* and reflect employee perceptions of *Quality of Peer Relationships* and *Intrinsic Job Satisfaction* on QoWL. This Factor also encompasses employee pride in working for their organisation and their intention to remain with their organisation.

4.4.5.3 Quality of Peer Relationships

This facet presents as relating to the Study 1 theme *Quality of Peer Relationships.* Relationships with peers were commented on by participants from all four organisations involved in Study 1, with the unanimous sentiment that good peer relationships have a wholly positive impact on the work experience expressed. A key aspect of these peer relationships was colleague support, which might be interpreted in the context of this Factor as an extrinsic contributor to *Job Satisfaction*.

4.4.5.4 Intrinsic Job Satisfaction

Gaining a sense of satisfaction through one's work is the focus of this facet of Factor 5 and this was expressed most strongly by Study 1 respondents from the Fire Service and the Ambulance Service with comments that this *Social Value* counteracted some of the negative aspects of the job. Items relating to this facet highlighted employee sense of satisfaction and achievement through the work they do.

4.4.5.5 Other

The final facet of this fifth Factor does not readily map onto the themes and sub-themes from Study 1, although there are links to a number of the (sub)themes discussed, whereby employees gain a greater sense of *Intrinsic Job Satisfaction* through extrinsic influences such as peer support. The other aspect of this Factor relates to the possible outcomes of low levels of *Intrinsic Job Satisfaction* which appear to influence employee commitment to the organisation and intention to quit. As such, this facet would appear to represent outcome aspects relating to employee *Commitment to the Organisation* and *Intention to Quit*.

4.4.5.6 Factor 5 – Fit with Published Findings

This fifth Factor, named *Job Satisfaction,* encompasses two aspects of job satisfaction with a focus on the sense of achievement and fulfilment an employee gets from their work (intrinsic job satisfaction) and the support gained through peer relationships. This Factor also encompasses what appear to be the potential outcomes of *Job Satisfaction* (or perceived lack of), with the inclusion of items relating to intention to quit, and commitment to the organisation.

Study 1 insights suggest that gaining a strong sense of satisfaction from work can be a mitigating factor for employees who do not feel a strong sense of commitment to their organisation. This sentiment was most prevalent in the respondents who worked directly with the public in the Ambulance and Fire Services, who seem able to manage what some perceived as an unsupportive employer through the intrinsic satisfaction derived from their client group(s). Lambert *et al.* (2001) found levels of job satisfaction to be related to intention to quit, as have a number of other studies (e.g. Agho *et al.* 1993; Cote and Morgan, 2002; Griffeth and Hom, 1992; Hulin *et al.* 1985; Steel and Ovalle, 1984), which would appear to support the current findings and thematic analysis conducted in Study 1 of this research. Furthermore, job dissatisfaction has also been shown to result in employee withdrawal (Lambert *et al.* 2001), which may well be a precursor to employee turnover. *Intention to Quit* has been highlighted in

the literature as a potential negative outcome of deficits in a number of aspects of QoWL - training and development (Owen, 2006); reward (Harter *et al.* 2002); balancing work and home life (Kreiner, 2006); and, flexible working (Eaton, 2003) – to name a few, and appears to be closely linked to the facets relating to gaining a sense of achievement through work and peer support in the context of the current study. Useful items in that they indicate employee *Commitment to the Organisation*, they reflect potential negative outcomes of poor QoWL.

General *Job Satisfaction* has also been found to increase job performance (Iaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985), although some research has found that job performance actually had a causal effect on job satisfaction (Brown *et al.* 1993; MacKenzie *et al.* 1998), while others found no such effect (Birnbaum and Somers, 1993; Dubinsky and Hartley, 1986). Job satisfaction has also been linked to employee turnover, absenteeism and organisational commitment (Mobley *et al.* 1979; Mueller and Price, 1990; Steer and Rhodes, 1978; Rainlall, 2004). Research by Blegen and Mueller (1987) found that the greater the number of jobs an employee was qualified to undertake, the lower their job satisfaction.

In the previous qualitative study Ambulance and Fire Service staff in particular expressed the fact that they get great satisfaction in helping others through their work. In these two examples, this facet actually seemed to mediate some of the dissatisfaction expressed by focus group members relating to the way the organisation is managed. Task variety and autonomy have been associated with job satisfaction (Curry *et al.* 1986; Melamed *et al.* 1995) and were also cited as ways in which employees drew satisfaction from their work, or felt dissatisfied in the absence of autonomy across a range of the organisations involved in the Study 1 interviews. Clarity of role has also been indicated as an influencing factor (Good *et al.* 1998) and may well link back to autonomy as it would seem difficult for employees to be autonomous in their role if their role is unclear or ill-defined. Camaraderie has also been linked to job satisfaction in some research leading proponents of this finding to recommend organisations to invest in building supportive teams (Lambert *et al.* 2001; Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1990; Mueller *et al.* 1994).

Feedback from the respondents in Study 1 highlighted the intrinsic aspects of job satisfaction as factors that might enhance or erode their QoWL. Feeling a sense of achievement in relation to having helped others was cited by the Paramedic and Fire Service employees, Recruitment Consultants and the teacher as being important factors in contributing to their QoWL. While having a sense of control and autonomy over how work is carried out seemed to be important in terms of the organisation demonstrating that it trusts its employees and the importance placed on employees gaining personal satisfaction in their own performance. The disconnect seen between employee and organisation within the Paramedic Service employee focus groups was

counterbalanced by the sense of doing good in the community, as well as the importance of camaraderie between work teams in the ambulance rigs and at the base.

Job Satisfaction has been explored more widely in the literature, although the scope of the definition varies considerably with many authors interpreting it as almost akin to QoWL, encompassing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (e.g. Centers and Bugental, 1966; Judge *et al.* 2001; Locke, 1969). The current research lays claim to presenting a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between job satisfaction and QoWL. *Job Satisfaction* has been linked to various outcomes; intention to quit (e.g. Agho *et al.* 1993; Carston and Spector, 1987; Cote and Morgan, 2002), job performance (e.g. Brown *et al.* 1993; MacKenzie *et al.* 1998) and absenteeism (e.g. Rainlall, 2004; Steer and Rhodes, 1978) but not directly to QoWL – likely as a result of the broad interpretation of job satisfaction by many authors. However, all emphasize the importance of employees achieving a sense of satisfaction in their work. The emergence of *Job Satisfaction* in the current research is in keeping with the past literature around the subject and is further supported by the findings of Study 1.

4.4.6 Factor 6 – Work-Life Balance

Items loading onto Factor 6 relate to employee perceptions of the balance between their work and home life. This Factor represents perceptions around employee ability to 'switch off' at the end of the day, and the degree to which they work over and above paid hours in order to get their job done. The five items that loaded on this construct aligned exclusively with the Study 1 theme *Job Demand/Workload* (18e; 24a; 12d; 17j; 23c) and each item embodies time sensitive elements relating to job demands and the balance with home life/leisure time.

4.4.6.1 Cross Loading Items

None of the items were high or moderate cross loaders on any of the other factors.

4.4.6.2 Discussion of Constituent Facets

The facets reflected within this Factor present as relating to employee perceptions of the degree to which working life impinges on non-working life. Distinct from Factor 4, *Flexibility* - this Factor encompasses employee perceptions of working hours, not in relation to their ability to adjust them but in the number of hours worked and the degree to which individuals feel able to 'switch off' at the end of the working day and obtain a clear distinction between their work and home lives.

Table 4.14. *Items from Factor 6 – Work-Life Balance related to the Themes and Sub-themes identified in Study 1 (Chapter 3)*

Study 1 Theme	**Study 1 Sub-theme**	**Items from Study 1 themes that loaded onto Factor 6 (Work-Life Balance)**
Job Demands/ Workload	Balance between Work and Home Life	I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done
		I often work more than 40 hours per week
		Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week
		I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home
		I feel under pressure to work long hours

4.4.6.3 Job Demands/Workload

This facet of Factor 6 relates to the degree to which employees feel they are able to gain an appropriate *Balance between Work and Home Life* and was the topic of much discussion in Study 1. For example, the cohort of Recruitment Consultants reported long working hours inhibiting their ability to engage in out of work interests, whilst accepting this as an expectation amongst their managers and employers. More broadly, white collar respondents cited remote internet access and mobile communication technology as a potential negative influence on maintaining *Work-Life Balance*, as a result of the ability to 'check in' with work emails remotely at any time.

4.4.6.4 Factor 6 – Fit with Published Findings

The final factor to emerge, *Work-Life Balance,* relates to employee perspectives on the extent to which working life impinges upon non-work life. A core element is the degree to which employees feel they are under pressure to work long hours and pervasive thoughts/contemplation of work-related issues whilst at home. A growing number of studies have explored the potential impacts of work-life on home life (see Hill *et al.* 2001; Shamir and Salomon, 1985). Negative correlates have been identified as: marital difficulties (Crouter *et al.* 1989; Matthews *et al.* 2006), withdrawal from family life and relationships due to work/home spill over (Padon and Buehler, 1995; Repetti and Wood, 1997).

Research relating to the impact of mobile technology is mixed with some citing it as a positive, allowing employees to cut out the daily commute by working from home, or closer locations (Hill *et al.* 1998), while others suggest that the exact nature and impact of benefits and dis-benefits are yet to be determined (Olson and Primps, 1984). Research more generally relating to *Work-Life Balance* does recognise a lack of it as a cause of conflict for employees (Kossek, 2005), resulting in a number of negative outcomes such as stress, absenteeism, intention to quit and job dissatisfaction (Kreiner, 2006; Parasuraman and Greenhaus, 2002).

Four of the five items loading onto this Factor relate to the number of hours an employee works, or feels obliged to work. According to Office of National Statistics (ONS) data, 52.1% of the population work between 31 and 45 hours a week on average and 19.1% of the population working in excess of 45 hours per week. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) estimates from this ONS data that the standard UK working week is around 37.5 hours, so the line to distinguish long working hours was set at 40 hours per week in questions directly citing hours worked. The Health and Safety Executive 'Working Time Regulations' (1998) state that "…a worker's working time, including overtime, in any reference period which is applicable in his case shall not exceed an average of 48 hours for each seven days." Expectations on employees was not limited to when they should be present in work with a number of office based staff commenting that they feel they must do preparatory work outside of their core hours in order to keep on top of their workload. Perceptions such as these are communicated through the behaviour of others within the organisation, be that colleagues, or management who condone the long hours culture by failing to challenge employees regularly working in excess of their contractual hours.

A significant body of recent research has focussed on the role of technology in facilitating remote and home working, with some studies suggesting that this has the power to enhance work-life balance by reducing employees' travel time and time away from the home (Baruch, 2000; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). Others however, suggest that the advancement of technology actually has negative outcomes in terms of QoWL, e.g. by limiting team and social interaction and blurring the line between work and home (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Shamir and Salomon, 1985). Further suggested negative outcomes of home-working include social isolation and reduced social support, degraded employee-supervisor relations (Jahoda, 1982; Olson and Primps, 1984; Shamir and Salomon, 1985); dilution of cultural norms and codes of conduct and diminished opportunities for learning from others and career advancement (Hackman, 1976). Whether the benefits outweigh the costs is difficult to determine and may well ultimately be determined by individual circumstance.

Work-Life Balance issues generated the largest proportion of comments in all focus groups and interviews in Study 1, particularly in relation to working long hours and being unable to plan time outside of work due to long or unpredictable working hours. Long commutes and inability of switch-off due to mobile technology were also raised as work-life balance issues. In pre mobile technology times, leaving the place of work signified the end of the working day as paperwork etc. was left at the office. While mobile technology might be lauded for allowing flexibility in working location and the ability to work on the move, it may also be that it prevents some employees from actually 'switching off' at the end of the working day. Mobile technology means that employees can receive email, business calls and text messages at any time and if the employee is not disciplined or confident enough to switch off their mobile at the end of the day, it could impact on home life and their ability to unwind. However, and especially in consideration of other comments received in Study 1, the potential dis-benefits of mobile technology might be counterbalanced by the benefits of not having to endure daily long commutes and excessively long working days as a result. Indeed, one of the key benefits cited by the mine workers interviewed was their close proximity to their place of work.

Work-Life Balance would appear to be an important factor for organisations to consider, especially in light of increasing numbers of dual earner families and the need to balance this with child care and care of elderly relatives. Implementation of work-life balance policies has been shown to reduce employee intention to quit and turnover (Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Eaton, 2003; Evans, 2001; Pohlen Kean, 2002), to lower re-recruitment costs (Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Evans, 2001), reduce absenteeism, improve morale (Comfort *et al*, 2003; Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998), as well as to improve productivity and corporate image (Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Evans, 2001). However, work-life balance policies seem to be less available to those in low skilled and hourly paid jobs (Galinsky and Bond, 1998) and more available in organisations with a high number of female employees (Konrad and Mangel, 2000).

Given the amassed evidence highlighting some of the benefits of facilitating work-life balance policies where possible and in light of the clear desire for greater flexibility in terms of working hours, location and remote technology expressed by the respondents in Study 1 of the current research, this factor would seem to be a noteworthy contributing factor in relation to QoWL.

Work-Life Balance was a consistent theme throughout the interviews and focus groups in Study 1. The literature relating to this factor explores an array of different and conflicting aspects of work-life balance from the negative impact on relationships at home (Hill *et al.* 2001; Matthews *et al.* 2006; Shamir and Salomon, 1985) and loss of social interaction and the support systems offered in the workplace when employees work remotely (Jahoda, 1982; Olson and Primps,

1984; Shamir and Salomon, 1985), to the reduction of intention to quit where flexible working is offered (Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Eaton, 2003) and, reduced absenteeism (Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Eaton, 2003). While many respondents in Study 1 of the current research expressed a desire to be able to work from home when they did not have the option, it could be a case of 'the grass being greener' and the reality of not attending a place of work might have more negative outcomes than positive.

4.5 Discussion

The Exploratory Factor Analysis revealed six nameable constructs that complemented and closely aligned with the themes identified in Study 1.

Table 4.15 provides a mapping of Study 2a findings onto the themes and sub-themes identified in Study 1. While there is notable similarity between the themes and sub-themes from Study 1, and the facets of the Factors from Study 2 the Factors do not directly mirror the Study 1 themes. Most similar in scope is Factor 3, *Development, Investment and Training*, which reflects aspects of the Study 1 theme *Investment in Staff*; Factor 4, *Flexibility,* which reflects aspects of the Study 1 theme *Job Demands / Workload,* and Factor 5, *Work-Life Balance,* which also reflects the Study 1 theme *Job Demands / Workload.* Factor 1 (*Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment*), Factor 2 (*Leader-Member Exchange*) and Factor 5 (*Job Satisfaction*) encompass aspects of more than one Study 1 theme. Whilst the Factors do not directly reflect the Study 1 themes, the majority of themes raised are reflected in the items comprising each of the Study 2 Factors (see previous sections discussing each Factor).

Factor 1, *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* relates closely to Levering's (1988) definition of (workplace) trust, which encompasses perceptions of value and fair treatment through the three facets presented by Levering (1988) as, credibility of management, respect for employee worth, and fairness in relation to employees perceiving that they are treated equitably. While this Factor reflects aspects of four of the Study 1 themes (*Investment in Staff; Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment; Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff; Perceived Organisational Support*), the common thread running through this Factor relates to the provision of reward and recognition being fair and equitable. The inclusion of items relating to *Involvement and Engagement*, whilst at first glance appearing distinct, when considered closely, actually has intuitive linkages with the concept of *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment*, in that employees need to be engaged and feel heard in order that the award of reward and recognition can be meaningful and equitable.

Table 4.15. *Study 1 Themes and Sub-themes and Study 2a Factors*

Study 1 – Theme / Sub-theme(s)	Study 2a - Factors
Investment in Staff: Access to Training and Development Opportunities; Non-Financial rewards; Career Progression Opportunities; Feedback and Praise	Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Development, Investment and Training; Leader-Member Exchange
Trust and Belief in Fair Treatment: Peer / Social Comparison	Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training
Job Demand / Workload: Balance between Work and Home Life; Flexibility and Choice; Expectations; Time Pressure	Flexibility; Work-Life Balance; Leader-Member Exchange
Quality of Peer Relationships: Camaraderie	Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment*; Job Satisfaction
Quality of Communication and managerial Engagement of Staff: Involvement and Engagement; Quality of Relationship between Manager / Supervisor and Employee	Leader-Member Exchange
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction: Social Value from doing One's Job	Job Satisfaction
Perceived Organisational Support: Perceived Organisational Support	Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment

**Fair Treatment* relates to employees' perceptions that they are treated equitably with their colleagues

Perceptions of discretionary rewards have been associated in the literature with having a positive effect on *Perceived Organisational Support* (e.g. Shore and Shore, 1995) and this might reasonably be interpreted as the employee perceiving such rewards as the organisation showing greater appreciation for the employees' efforts by awarding a reward outside that which is expected/espoused. The fact that aspects relating to the Study 1 theme *Investment in Staff* are present in this factor is unsurprising when considered from the perspective of the employee perceiving this investment as reward and recognition for their efforts and has been shown to increase employee engagement and retention (Lockwood, 2007).

Factor 2, *Leader-Member Exchange*, relates to the dyadic employee-manager relationship and spans four of the Study 1 themes: *Investment in Staff; Trust and Belief in fair Treatment; Job Demands/Workload; Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff.* Whilst this Factor does not align exclusively with the Study 1 theme relating to the employee-manager relationship, *Quality of Communication and Managerial Engagement with Staff*, the majority (11 of the 18) of items do relate directly to this Study 1 theme. The additional items loading onto this Factor all relate to other aspects of the employee-manager relationship, reflecting the manager's/supervisor's recognition of employees through feedback and praise, the consistency

and fairness with which managers/supervisors treat employees, and the degree to which the manager/ supervisor understands the employee's workload, all of which will likely influence the quality of the relationship between the two. The subject of great interest in the literature, there is little doubt that this is an important aspect of QoWL, with research linking it to a number of outcomes including innovation (Scott and Bruce, 1994), intention to quit (Vecchio, 1982), career progression (Wakabayashi and Graen, 1984) and organisational commitment (Nystrom, 1990). Closely aligned with Factor 1, *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment*, aspects of this Factor reflect the leadership level of trust, fairness and investment where Factor 1 reflects these aspects of QoWL at the organisational level.

Factor 3, *Development, Investment and Training* relates to ease of access to training and development opportunities and career progression opportunities. The majority of items in the Factor aligned with the Study 1 theme *Investment in Staff* with only 1 of the 13 items loading onto this Factor aligning with the Study 1 theme *Trust and Belief in fair Treatment.* This item, whilst aligning to a different Study 1 theme was still closely associated with training and development, focussing on employee perceptions of how fair, or otherwise, opportunities are. The literature tends to explore training and development and career progression as separate aspects of QoWL (e.g. Choo and Bowley, 2007; Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992; Owens, 2006; Rousseau, 1989; Sullivan, 1999), and whilst this may present a clearer picture of each for the purpose of research, there are intuitive linkages between the two, in that greater training and development opportunities would appear to be perceived by employees as being intricately linked to their career advancement potential.

Factor 4, *Flexibility* aligns with aspects of the Study 1 theme *Job Demands/Workload* particularly in relation to aspects of flexible working related to hours of work, taking time when needed for personal errands, and the employees' ability to plan their working day as they see fit. This Factor reflects aspects of autonomy present in the literature (e.g. Gellis *et al.* 2004; Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Watson, 2003), and particularly, the impact of autonomy in relation to working hours on work-family conflict (Ahuja, 2007; Goldstein, 2003). Discussed particularly by the Recruitment Consultant cohort in Study 1, lack of flexibility of working hours was cited as a cause of frustration. The emergence of this factor in the current study would suggest that this is an important aspect of QoWL, and recent changes to UK flexible working law (ACAS.org.uk; Gov.org.uk) would seem to indicate a widening recognition of the importance of flexibility in working life today.

Factor 5, *Job Satisfaction* does not clearly align to any particular Study 1 theme. Whilst this may, at first glance appear incongruous, on closer inspection, there does appear to be some logic

behind this grouping of items. Defined by Locke (1969) as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (p.316), *Job Satisfaction* has been associated with various aspects of QoWL. As such, it follows that it might be represented in a number of the Study 1 themes, as such joy might be the result of differing aspects of working life for different people. The fact that this aspect of QoWL has emerged as Factor in its own right, does highlight the fact that it should not merely be considered a by-product of other aspects of QoWL and should be credited in and of itself. The slightly vague, and highly subjective nature of *Job Satisfaction* potentially makes this aspect of QoWL most difficult to clearly define and as a result, to influence. Ensuring that employees have an enriching working environment and are listened to might represent the best way to establish and understand different sources of *Job Satisfaction* for different employees.

Factor 6, *Work-Life Balance*, like Factor 4 (*Flexibility*), aligns to the Study 1 theme *Job Demands/Workload.* While these two Factors both align to this Study 1 theme, they each draw upon different aspects of workload and the demands of the job, with this Factor relating to working long hours and the impact that work has on home life in terms of the degree to which an employee is still thinking/worrying about work at the end of the working day. Associated in the literature with having a negative impact on home life (Paden and Buehler, 1995; Repetti and Wood, 1997; Matthews *et al.* 2006), *Work-Life Balance* seems likely to become increasingly prominent on the QoWL agenda as more families become dual-earner families and mobile technology increasingly threatens to blur the line between working and home life.

Apparent throughout the Factors was the common theme of *communication*, representing a thread linking all aspects of QoWL derived from the current study. Communication has been shown to influence organisational commitment (Mathieu and Zadjac, 1990) and this influence is particularly evident in relation to direct communication between management and employees (Postmes *et al.* 2001). The method of communication has also been shown to be important, whereby the employment of a number of different communication channels in top down communication can enhance employee sense of identification with the organisation and as a result increase employee commitment to the organisation (Smidts *et al.* 2001). Communication related directly to the employee's work, that is considered high quality, has also been shown to enhance employee commitment to the organisation (Guest and Conway, 2002; de Ridder, 2004). The fact that communication was evident across the Factors, through the items to emerge from the Exploratory Factor Analysis would indicate that getting communication at both the Leader-Member level, and from the wider organisation as a whole right is a key aspect of enhancing QoWL.

While there is variance between some of the Study 1 themes and the Factors to emerge from Study 2 (which are discussed in 4.6), overall there is a high degree of consistency in the core components of both studies, highlighting the potential importance to employee QoWL of aspects relating to: perceptions of fair treatment; the relationship between leader and subordinate; training and (career) development opportunities; flexibility and the ability to satisfactorily balance work and home life; and overall job satisfaction. What Study 2 offers is a triangulation of Study 1 findings, increasing confidence in the core components identified in Study 1, and the starting point for the development of a QoWL climate tool to allow organisations to assess the QoWL of their employees.

4.6 Strengths and Limitations

The current research achieved a more diverse sample than in most previously attempted studies. However, the sample size was fairly modest and contains some notable imbalance, notably the over-representation of public sector employees etc. (see notes earlier on sampling – section 4.2.4.1). Findings do offer some confirmation of the structure of qualitative findings but also some notable differences in the grouping of components. Most marked differences in this respect were evident in relation to Factor 1, *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment*; Factor 2, *Leader-Member Exchange*; and Factor 5, *Intrinsic Job Satisfaction.* This variation perhaps indicates just how interconnected facets of QoWL are, and highlights the subjective nature of the subject as a whole.

The identified constructs were nameable and reflected findings from the literature, however little could be determined with regard to their relative salience to employees, or indeed the degree to which this might vary between individuals or different groups with shared demographic features, e.g. by gender or employment sector.

A confirmatory factor analysis based on a second comparable dataset would permit testing of the derived factor structure. This however was beyond the scope of this thesis.

Whilst reference to the Management Standards and Safety Culture/Climate traditions provided a tried and tested framework against which to position the current research, potential limitations should be heeded and considered. Building upon findings from Study 1, Study 2a set out to complement, validate and refine the previous perspective on core QoWL constructs. The study revealed that a stable factor structure could be derived. However, what remained opaque at this stage was the degree to which employees in different job types, roles and sectors exhibited consensus over the relative importance of the identified constructs. Future research might seek

to apply the tool presented here in organisational settings to gather data for such Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

The current study draws upon insight into what employees feel is important in relation to their QoWL from the previous qualitative study (see Chapter 3) and uses this insight as the basis for the development of questionnaire items. Exploratory Factor Analysis was applied to the dataset gathered to assess parity between the emergent factor structure and the themes to emerge from the previous study (Study 1, Chapter 3), as well as the item set refined down to a set of core QoWL related items. Next steps would be the application of the tool to a larger data set such that Confirmatory Factor Analysis can be applied, to further validate and determine reliability of the emergent factor structure, but unfortunately that sits outside of the current research.

4.7 Conclusions

- The six nameable constructs *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction; Work-Life Balance* account for 58.4% of the total variance.
- The identified constructs are complemented by and interpretable with reference to established research findings.
- The strength of the current study is held to lie in the fact that the questionnaire was developed on the basis of findings from Study 1, i.e. the questions and themes explored were grounded into aspects of QoWL as presented in the accounts provided by employees, and of central relevance to them. In this sense, Study 2a afforded a useful opportunity for triangulation on/validation of findings from Study 1.
- The factors to emerge from the Exploratory Factor Analysis compliment, and go some way towards validation and refinement of the constructs identified in Study 1
- The relatively large (N=442) sample, reflecting a broader demographic spread, increases confidence in the Study 1 findings through the triangulation of variables using the quantitative method employed in the current Study.
- The factor structure appeared to be suitable for developing proto scales that might be used to quantify and explore differences in the profile of the constructs for different sub-samples, referenced to an array of primary demographics, e.g., gender, age and employment sector. This could extend to exploring the potential for the constructs to form the basis for the development of an organisation-level psychometric QoWL climate assessment/profiling tool.

Chapter 5: Study 2b - Exploring demographic differences in ratings of components of QOWL - the scope for developing a Quantitative QoWL Climate Tool

5.0 Introduction

The following chapter builds upon findings from Study 2a. In taking the factors to emerge from the Principal Components Analysis and using these as the basis for working towards the development of a psychometric instrument to profile employee QoWL, in a manner that echoes the workplace Safety Culture/Climate and Management Standards tradition, i.e. focusing on precursors/variables that impact on employee experiences, attitudes and behaviour. The aim was to explore the potential for the factors identified in Study 2 to form the basis of a QoWL climate assessment tool, with the capacity to capture and profile headline influences on employee QoWL and explore socio-demographic differences in the profile of salient variables. The development of a climate tool of this type would provide organisations with the facility to benchmark employee perspectives, characterise social differences by job-role, grade and function and use the output to identify priorities for intervention/improvement.

This chapter provides an account of an exploration of demographic differences and predictive relationships using respondent 'scores' derived from the summing of scaled responses on each Factor. The approach adopted reflects the initial stages of scale development. However, it does not lay claim to the production of a measure, as the data gathered did not extend to assessing re-test reliability and stability of responses over time and, more fundamentally, does not benefit from the further enhancement of the constructs that might be derived from a confirmation of the factor structure, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, also lies outside the scope of this thesis. The potential for the development of a QoWL climate measure is discussed.

5.1 Context and Relevance of Study

Proponents of evidence-based approaches, as outlined in the White Paper *Modernising Government* (1999), point to the benefits of adopting an informed and strategic approach to managing well-being. It is held that these principles extend beyond the public policy arena to the world of work and employer practice in addressing well-being at work; QoWL being a core component of employee well-being (see Weyman *et al*, 2012).

Evidence-based approaches to gather feedback on organisational performance are already widely applied by employers. Staff attitude surveys are probably the most common example, similarly Safety climate tools, such as that developed by the Health and Safety Laboratory's (1999) and the HSE's Management Standards for work related stress (HSE, 2009) have been quite widely used. A common feature of measures of this type is that they seek to characterise latent features of organisational climate that impact on employee attitudes and behaviour. Their purpose is to highlight areas of strength and weakness to inform senior management thinking over the need for intervention, i.e. they are tools to enhance organisational learning.

The study of organisational climate has yet to gain a universally accepted set of constructs (Wallace, *et al.* 1999). A multi-faceted approach has been proposed in relation to its measurement by some (e.g. Jones and James, 1979; Joyce and Slocum, 1982), with Jones and James (1979) presenting a six-dimensional model encompassing; leadership, workgroup cooperation, conflict, organisational intelligence, job challenge and task variety and trust. A further complicating factor is the lack of consensus over definitions of Culture and Climate, with many authors using the terms interchangeably (Barker, 1994). Culture might be described as referent to organisational values and belief systems (Pettigrew, 1979), while Climate encompasses behavioural and attitudinal aspects (Moran and Volkwein, 1992). As such, Climate lends itself to measurement through the application of attitude scales (e.g. Likert scales; Likert, 1932) and this method has long been applied to measurement of Safety Climate (e.g. HSL Safety Climate Tool, 1999), and more recently to organisational stress with the launch of the Management Standards (HSE, 2009).

However, adopting an evidence-based approach presents challenges for employers, particularly in the area of psychosocial elements. Firstly, they must locate and then remove the academic encryption surrounding research papers presenting (particularly in the case of QoWL) a plethora of information, views and evidence relating to *what works.* Assuming the organisation in question has people in its employ able to do this, it then has to try and identify what interventions might best target the issue at hand.

In the organisational risk management and safety arena there has been a long tradition of assessing Safety Climate using questionnaire tools, e.g. the Health and Safety Laboratory *Safety Climate Tool* (1999). The more recently developed Management Standards for work related stress (HSE, 1999) reflects complementary perspectives, in focusing on employee perceptions of the profile of precursor variables with the potential to lead to detrimental effects. The aim of these tools is to support organisational learning and epidemiology and to facilitate better management of variables impacting on employee well-being and safety performance in the work place.

The approach adopted in this study is in idiom of the Safety Climate and Stress Management tools, in focusing on precursors to 'harm' associated with the design and configuration of work. Climate surveys function at the organisational, not the individual level, but are based on the perceptions of the workforce at a given point in time and have been said to, "Allow management to sense shifts in the workplace atmosphere" (Cox and Flin (1998), p.192). These authors go on to emphasise that employee beliefs are inconstant and potentially malleable (prone to alter in response to changes in workplace practices and norms) and, as such, being able to sample the *atmosphere* at given points in time has the potential to unearth useful information upon which an organisation can act, be that in relation to the safety or the well-being of their employees. "Climate measures… tend to focus on current perceptions and attitudes to management and supervision, corporate and managerial policies and practices, and social aspects of the work situation such as trust, openness, discipline and team support" (according to Cox and Flin 1998; p.193).

As articulated in detail in earlier chapters (see Chapter 2: Literature Review; Chapter 3: Study 1 - Discussion; Chapter 4: Study 2a – Discussion), the study of QoWL, specifically the variables that influence it and related outcomes, has been the subject of debate and empirical enquiry for several decades. Much of this research has focussed on the potential business benefits of investing in QoWL (e.g. Efraty and Sirgy, 1990; Gladstein, 1984; Goodman *et al.* 1988), but such studies are typically limited to an exploration of a small number of variables (e.g. Choo and Bowley, 2007; Crouter *et al*, 2001; Gerstner and Day, 1997) or a limited sample population (e.g. Bartol, 1980; Duxbury and Higgins, 1991). To date, research findings offer little consensus with regards to a core set of variables relevant to the majority of employees, leaving businesses with the unenviable task of trying to trawl through a plethora of proposed contributing factors and lengthy questionnaires in an attempt to isolate those factors most likely to yield positive change when addressed.

5.1.1 Aim

- To explore the potential scope for developing the six factor solution to produce a QOWL climate assessment tool

5.1.2 Objectives

- refine the output of the Factor Analysis to produce a set of proto-construct scales;
- explore the capacity of the proto-construct scales to profile/discriminate between different groups of employees/occupations;
- explore and formally test for the presence of variability in QoWL profiles for a range of sub-populations.

5.2 Method

While recognising the need for additional data gathering to produce a second sample, in order to conduct a Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and that the survey sample would not support a full scale development process, it was felt that there was merit in using the available data to explore the extent to which respondents shared a common (or divergent view) on salient includes on QoWL.

Exploratory in nature, the study also sought to inform thinking on the scope for developing a Climate measure with the capacity to benchmark and profile employee perspectives on QoWL.

5.2.1 Participants

The sample was made up of those participants who responded to the quantitative survey (see Chapter 4).

5.2.2 Procedure

The six factors identified through the Principal Components Analysis described in Chapter 4, Study 2a comprised of 76 items. Summing the product of the scaled responses (taking account of the directionality of items) made it possible to produce a score for each respondent.

Initial consistency coefficients (alpha) for the set of items loading on each of the raw factors, revealed values ranging between 0.7 and 0.9. This was considered promising, as the values exceeded recommendations on minimal internal consistency (see Spector, 1992) (see Table 5.1).

The 76 items extracted by the Factor Analysis (see Chapter 4: Study 2a), were examined to determine the loading on each factor. The degree of semantic overlap with other items was also considered. Items with low factor loadings and a high degree of overlap with another item loading on the same factor were removed. This resulted in a reduced item set consisting of 45 items, ranging from between five and 10 items per scale, each exhibiting an acceptable level of internal consistency reliability (coefficient $\alpha > 0.70$). However, an examination of the items within each factor revealed evidence of an overlap, repetition and redundancy within the item sets. In the interests of parsimony, an iterative item analysis was performed, where duplicate items were judged to be present, in the majority of instances, those with higher loadings were retained. In a smaller number of instances low loading items were retained where they were judged to better complement the other retained items. The impact on the coefficient of consistency was examined at each iteration. On the basis of this assessment, 28 items were removed from the six scales resulting in a total of 45 items (see Appendix O). The α reliability was recalculated following the removal of duplicate items and, found to retain an acceptable degree of integrity in each case (α ranging between 0.72-0.96) (see Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1. *Internal Consistency Alpha Coefficients*

Factor	**No. of items**	**α**
Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment	9	0.957
Leader-Member exchange	9	0.958
Development, Investment and Training	8	0.911
Flexibility	8	0.871
Job Satisfaction	5	0.722
Work-Life Balance	5	0.768

5.2.3 Analysis

The analysis set out to use the set of proto-scales to explore and test a range of demographic differences, e.g. by age, gender, socio-economic status, employment sector (public versus private). For the tests of differences each factor was explored independently. The scope for multivariate analysis was limited by the size of the available sample.

5.3 Exploration of Age Cohort Differences

Following established precedents (ONS 2011) differences by age were explored at three levels (16–25; 26–49; 50^{+}years). The exploration was purposive and reflected established life-course insights that suggest that adults in the UK spend the years 18-25 in further education and/or developing the early stages of their career. Hereafter, ONS (2011) data suggests that individuals start to settle down, get married and start a family. This life course phase is cast as continuing until the age of around 50 years, to the point where child rearing responsibilities diminish (ONS, 2011).

5.3.1 Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment

Established research insights suggest differences in what people value from work. Specifically, it has been suggested that that older employees tend to feel that their contribution to their organisation is not recognised (Karanika-Murray and Weyman, 2013), with claims that lack of recognition of efforts may result in people retiring earlier than they might otherwise have done (Frederickson, 2006; Smeaton and McKay, 2005).

Hypothesis 1: Ratings of Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment will vary by age.

5.3.2 Leader-Member Exchange

Published findings suggest a number of differences in relationships between managers and employees. There is some debate over whether the basis for these differences reflects maturation effects (Polach, 2007; Rhodes, 1983) or en-cultured age cohort effects (Smola and Sutton, 2002; Tulgan, 2000). For example, there are claims that employees of different age cohorts have different expectations/preferences regarding communication with their supervisors and managers (Bradford and Raines, 1992; Strauss and Howe, 1991; Tulgan, 2000). Additionally, older employees are said to feel more inhibited in making requests of their line manager (Karanika-Murray and Weyman, 2013), there are also widespread claims of employer and managerial discrimination presenting as marginalisation and exclusion of older employees.

Hypothesis 2: Ratings of Leading-Member Exchange will be vary by age.

5.3.3 Development, Investment & Training

Published findings indicate that older employees exhibit lower desire for training and personal development, than younger employees (Aldag and Brief, 1977; Cook and Wall, 1980; Hackman and Oldham, 1976), which might indicate that older employees differ from their younger counterparts in having less desire for training. However, more recent research (Karanika-Murray and Weyman, 2013) suggests that older employees actually do desire training and development opportunities but feel they are not offered them by their employers due to a perception that their employer does not want to invest in them.

Hypothesis 3: Ratings of Development, Investment & Training will be vary by age.

5.3.4 Flexibility

It has been suggested that older employees place greater value on autonomy and flexibility over working hours, for example, to enable them to care for elderly relatives and grandchildren (Hall and Mirvis, 1995; Smeaton *et al.* 2009; Karanika-Murray and Weyman, 2013). Other findings highlight the importance and value placed upon flexible working arrangements amongst employees at various ages/life stages (Hill *et al.* 1998; Hill *et al.* 2006).

Hypothesis 4: Ratings of Flexibility will be variable by age.

5.3.5 Job Satisfaction

Published evidence relating to *Job Satisfaction* and age is mixed, with some authors reporting no significant differences (Aldag and Brief, 1975; Fryer, 1927; Hoppock, 1936; Kornhauser and Sharp, 1932), while others suggest there is a positive correlation between age and *Job Satisfaction* (Stagner, 1975; Staines and Quinn, 1979; Weaver, 1980). Yet further findings indicate a shift in the balance of intrinsic to extrinsic components, with older workers placing greater value on intrinsic elements (Weyman *et al.* 2013).

Hypothesis 5: Ratings of Job Satisfaction will be vary by age.

5.3.6 Work-Life Balance

Work-Life Balance embodies elements relating to job-demands, as well as employee preferences with respect to work and non-work time. Published findings are conflicting in relation to age and *Work-Life Balance* with some sources suggesting that early career employees are more

focused on work (Woodward, 2000), with shifts towards home during the early stages of child rearing (Golden, 2001; Woodward, 2000), while a large number of sources suggest that older employees aspire to a stronger focus on home life, due to a higher value placed on leisure time (see, for example, Weyman *et al.* 2012), as well as the need to balance work with caring responsibilities. e.g. Elderly relatives and young grandchildren.

Hypothesis 6: Ratings of Work-Life Balance will be vary by age.

5.3.7 Results

A series of univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) calculations revealed the results presented in Table 5.2. (For a summary of calculations see Appendix P for SPSS ANOVA Outputs - Age).

Table 5.2. *Summary Calculations for ANOVA by Age - p</=0.05*

	16-25 years		25-50 years		50+ years						
Factor	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	*df*1	*Df*2	F	*p*	Eta²
1	68.77	7.691	69.47	8.735	70.00	9.096	2	402	0.179	0.836	0.001
2	43.93	9.468	44.52	12.167	45.41	13.184	2	402	0.150	0.860	0.002
3	40.50	6.962	41.55	6.099	42.86	5.901	2	402	1.421	0.243	0.007
4	22.10	5.081	19.42	5.038	19.20	4.391	2	402	4.149	0.016	0.020
5	17.30	3.075	18.11	3.047	17.36	2.720	2	402	2.011	0.135	0.010
6	16.63	4.106	12.54	4.053	12.09	4.186	2	402	14.617	0.000	0.068

5.3.8 Interpretation of Results

Hypothesis 1: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* showed no significant difference at the p<0.05 confidence level between the three age cohorts. Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Hypothesis 2: *Leader-Member Exchange* showed no significant difference at the p<0.05 confidence level between the three age cohorts. Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypothesis 3: *Development, Investment and Training* showed no significant difference at the p<0.05 confidence level between the three age cohorts. Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Hypothesis 4: *Flexibility* resulted in a significant difference by age cohort at the $p<0.05$ level, with age cohorts 25-50 years and 50^{+} years indicating significantly lower ratings of flexibility than the 16-25 year old cohort. Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Hypothesis 5: *Job Satisfaction* showed no significant difference at the $p<0.05$ confidence level between the three age cohorts. Hypothesis 5 not was supported.

Hypothesis 6: *Work-Life Balance* showed a significant difference by age cohort at the $p<0.05$ level. Age cohorts 25-50 years and 50^{+} years indicated lower levels of agreement with the items relating to *Work-Life Balance* than the 16-25 year old cohort, indicating that older respondents rate their Work-Life Balance as lower than that of their younger counterparts. Hypothesis 6 was supported.

While significant differences were detected for *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance*, the overall picture was of a very similar profile by age. However, it should be noted that some of the cell sizes (e.g. 16-25 years and 50^{+} years cohorts) were modest; N=30 and N=44 respectively, and disproportionate (N=331 for the 25-50 years cohort), which had undesirable implications, with respect to sample distribution power. Cohen (1988) suggests that Eta^2 values of 0.01 are considered small, 0.06 medium, and 0.14 high. In relation to this assessment of power, even for those factors that did show significant differences between age groups (*Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance*), the Eta^2 calculation was low (see Table 5.2), the power of which might also be increased with the benefit of larger samples for the 16-25 years and 50^{+} years cohorts.

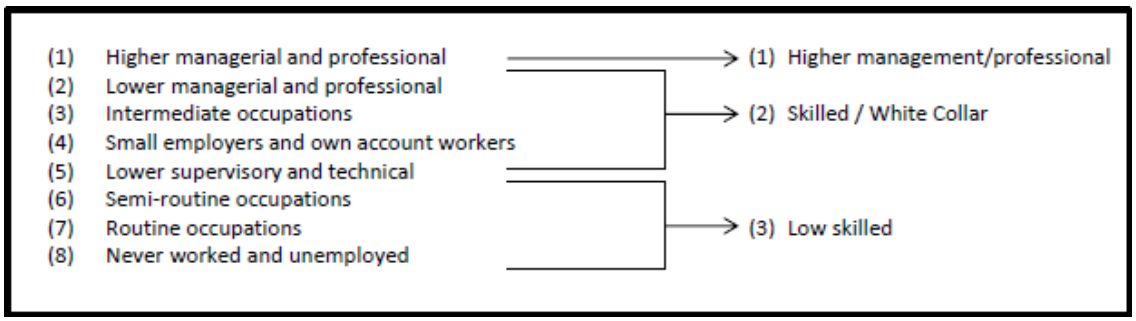
5.4 Exploration of Differences by Socio-Economic Status

Evidence of differences in QoWL by Socio-Economic Status is extensive. Unskilled and low skilled jobs in traditional sectors e.g. manufacturing, tend to afford limited opportunity for flexible working on account of the interdependency of processes. Similarly, many service sector jobs, e.g. call centres, hospitality and goods distribution centre roles tend to embody low levels of autonomy and tend to be tightly regulated in terms of breaks, as well as having restricted choice over working hours (see, for example, Baumgartner *et al,* 2002; Deery *et al.* 2002; Smith and Sprigg, 2001; Sprigg and Jackson, 2006; Zapf *et al.* 2003); they then to have limited investment in training/personal development (Baumgartner *et al,* 2002), experience low levels of intrinsic job satisfaction (Aiello and Kolb, 1995; Sprigg and Jackson, 2006) and receive low financial rewards.

Skilled blue collar and white collar workers are generally characterised as enjoying greater autonomy and flexibility (Watson, 1995) than blue collar workers, but, particularly at intermediate grades are also prone to feel that their effort is under-recognised and undervalued (Kalleberg and Griffin, 1978), receive modest financial reward (rates of pay for many are broadly equivalent to semi/unskilled rates – ONS, 2012) and modest intrinsic job satisfaction (Goldthorpe and Lockwood, 1968). However, compared with semi/unskilled workers there is evidence of enhanced volume and quality of leader-member exchange, as well as greater autonomy over the organisation of work, and hours of work (Wedderburn and Crompton, 1972). While managerial roles are generally perceived as offering greatest autonomy and flexibility over working arrangements, numerous authors point to the rise in mobile remote working technology as sponsoring a rise in working hours and negative impacts on work life balance (see, for examples, Brett and Stroh, 2003). Other research suggests that for managers and professionals, long working hours offer reward and recognition they do not get through fulfilling their roles in the home (parent, carer etc.), with this being translated into a perception that working long hours will yield positive feedback and financial reward and in some high profile instances, media accolade (Buck *et al.* 2000). Additionally, the higher pay associated with managerial and professional roles might also provide the employee with sufficient disposable income to engage in more costly, less time consuming leisure activities (Brett and Stroh, 2003).

The data was split into three broad bands of job grade; Senior Manager/Director; Supervisor/ Manager and Technical/Skilled/Front line staff. Again, given the modest size of the data set it was considered appropriate to break the sample down into no more than three cohorts to preserve large enough data sets for comparison. The groupings were based upon the three strata model of socio-economic status developed by Weyman *et al.* (2012), on the basis of a distillation of Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and Socio-economic Classification (SEC) data (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1. *Three strata of SES (Weyman et al. 2012)*



Source: Weyman *et al.* 2012; derived from Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2009) Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and Socio-economic Classification (SEC).

5.4.1 Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment

Published literature suggests that employees will likely experience lower levels of job satisfaction in lower SES jobs as a result of being awarded fewer rewards – both financial and intrinsic in nature (Kalleberg and Griffin, 1980) and it cannot be disputed that some roles within organisations pay more than others, for example, managers, executives, skilled workers (Acker, 2006). Published research has found that employees with a higher level of education tend to report lower levels of satisfaction at work, indicating that perceptions that one is being recognised and rewarded appropriately is related in some measure to what employees *expect* to receive for their efforts (Clark and Oswald, 1996). These perceptions appear to relate not only to educational level, but also to what employees perceive to be appropriate to their experience and effort. Such perceptions of reward and recognition being fair are evident as far back as the Hawthorne Studies (1939) where employees reportedly expressed dissatisfaction at rates of pay and rewards that they perceived to be unrepresentative of level of seniority and skill (Adams, 1965).

Hypothesis 1: Ratings of *Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment* will vary by SES.

5.4.2 Leader-Member Exchange

Green *et al.* (1996) suggests that communication between managers and subordinates might be inhibited where the demographic status 'gap' is larger. Leader-Member Exchange reflects a power relationship within the workplace, and essentially relates to a discourse that tends to be initiated by leaders, and the receptiveness of leaders to communications initiated by employees. Also, issues of reciprocity tend to be related to job grade (Kocoglu *et al*, 2014), sponsoring the institutive conclusion that ratings of *LMX* are foreseeably variable by SES; possibly reflecting a positive linear relationship.

Hypothesis 2: Ratings of *Leader-Member Exchange* will vary by SES.

5.4.3 Development, Investment & Training

Access to training opportunities has been shown to be biased in favour of those in higher skilled jobs (Arulampalam and Booth, 2001; Dieckhoff *et al.* 2007; Lindsay *et al.* 2012) and those with higher educational attainment (Blundell *et al.* 1996; Lindsay *et al.* 2012). Furthermore, employees who undertake work related training appear to gain from it in relation to 5-10% wage

increases as a result (Blundell *et al.* 1996). This inequality in access to training presents a potential 'glass ceiling' through which low skilled workers cannot progress.

Hypothesis 3: Ratings of *Development, Investment and Training* will vary by SES.

5.4.4 Flexibility

The degree of *Flexibility* an employee has in relation to their autonomy to organise their work and their working day and have choice over their working hour will vary dependent on the nature of the role (see, for example, Sprigg and Jackson, 2006) and tends to be linked to job status/skill level, i.e. flexibility is a correlate of seniority (see Blauner, 1960; Watson, 1995). The impact of flexibility and autonomy does not appear to be a straight forward one in relation to employee experiences of working life. Short-term absence has been shown to be higher in blue collar workers with high autonomy, for instance (Bouville, 2010), while for employees holding lower level white collar jobs, autonomy has a negative association with sickness absence (short, medium and long term in nature) (Bouville, 2010).

Hypothesis 4: Ratings of *Flexibility* will vary by SES.

5.4.5 Job Satisfaction

There are extensive and long recognised differences in ratings of Job satisfaction by SES, (see, for example, Blauner (1960, 1964). According to Blauner (1960), key distinctions are held to relate to skill-based differences and occupational prestige in intrinsic satisfaction. Taken in summation, these findings might appear to predict a positive linear relationship between SES and *Job Satisfaction*, however, more recent research indicates little difference in job satisfaction ratings between low and high skilled workers (Green and Tsitsianis, 2005). It further appears that *Job Satisfaction* is closely aligned with expectations, in that if an employee does not expect to engage in interesting or challenging work, they are not dissatisfied when what they get is uninteresting work (Watson, 1995).

In relation to intrinsic job satisfaction, SES does not appear to be the discriminating factor, with little difference in reported job satisfaction among low and high skilled employees (Green and Tsitsianis, 2005). Furthermore, educational attainment does not appear to be associated with job satisfaction (Oswald and Gardner, 2002), but skills mismatch does, with those concerned perceiving that they are underutilising their skills reporting lower job satisfaction (Borghans and de Grip, 2001).

Hypothesis 5: Ratings of *Job Satisfaction* will vary by SES.

5.4.6 Work-Life Balance

Established research insights suggest that *Work-Life Balance* is more difficult to achieve in higher SES roles (Kohn and Slomczynski, 1990; Schieman *et al.* 2006). However, it has been suggested that greater resources available to those in higher SES roles allows them to better manage work-home spillover. Consequently, the impact is felt more acutely by those at the lowest levels of SES (Vaananen *et al.* 2008).

Hypothesis 6: Ratings of *Work-Life Balance* will vary by SES.

5.4.7 Results

A series of univariate ANOVAs revealed the results presented in Table 5.3. (For a summary of calculations and Appendix Q for SPSS ANOVA Outputs - SES).

5.4.8 Interpretation of Results

Hypothesis 1: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* revealed no difference by SES. Hypothesis one was not supported.

Hypothesis 2: *Leader-Member Exchange* revealed no difference by SES. Hypothesis two was not supported.

Hypothesis 3: *Development, Investment and Training* revealed no difference by SES cohorts. Hypothesis three was not supported.

Hypothesis 4: *Flexibility* revealed a difference by SES. Hypothesis four was supported – there is a difference in ratings of Flexibility by SES - although the Eta² value in this instance was low (see Table 5.3).

Hypothesis 5: *Job Satisfaction* revealed no significant difference by SES cohorts. Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Hypothesis 6: *Work-Life Balance* revealed a significant difference by SES as hypothesized. The front line SES cohort indicated significantly more agreement with the items relating to this factor, than the supervisor and management cohorts, indicating that those respondents of lower SES perceive their Work-Life Balance to be poorer. Hypothesis 6 was supported.

Table 5.3 presents the means, highlighting the differences between mean responses from the Front Line cohort compared with those of the Supervisor and Manager cohorts in relation to constructs *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance.*

As with age, while statistically significant differences were detected for Flexibility and Work-Life Balance, the overall picture was of a very similar profile by job status, indicating that people of different job grades ascribe a broadly equivalent level of importance to the identified variables, with the exception of factor 6, *Work-Life Balance*, which is supported by a high Eta² value, indicating sufficient power. However, in the case of the front line cohort in particular, the sample size was low (N=42), therefore, a larger sample size may increase the power of the significance of factor 4, *Flexibility*, and may also impact on the results of the other factors.

Table 5.3. *Summary Calculations for ANOVA by Socio-Economic Status*

	Senior Mgmt		Supervisor		Front Line						
Factor	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	*df*1	*Df*2	F	*p*	Eta²
1	67.98	9.180	69.12	8.032	70.75	9.295	3	401	1.454	0.227	0.012
2	42.36	11.924	45.52	12.051	43.92	11.695	3	401	1.226	0.300	0.009
3	41.19	6.564	41.69	5.809	41.75	6.665	3	401	0.195	0.899	0.001
4	17.10	4.333	19.86	5.203	19.88	4.687	3	401	3.973	0.008	0.029
5	17.36	3.145	18.21	2.929	17.74	3.041	3	401	1.287	0.278	0.009
6	11.67	3.804	11.69	3.709	15.03	4.365	3	401	20.892	0.000	0.135

5.5 Exploration of Gender Differences

The data was split by gender (Males N = 249; Females N = 155) to explore any differences across the six constructs, using a series of t tests (significance set at p</=0.05).

5.5.1 Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment

The literature in relation to gender and *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* is mixed, with some suggesting that women are less likely to be offered development opportunities than their male counterparts (Bartol, 1980), while others report finding that although men and women might be treated differently, women find reward in different areas of working life than do men (Ross and Mirowsky, 1996).

Hypothesis 1: Ratings of *Reward, Recognition & Fair Treatment* will vary by gender.

5.5.2 Leader-Member Exchange

Research in relation to *Leader-Member Exchange* and gender is scant, although it has been proposed that higher quality exchanges are found in same gender leader-member pairings (Duchon *et al.* 1986; Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989; Vecchio and Brazil, 2007), which might prove a disbenefit to either gender.

Hypothesis 2: Ratings of *Leader-Member Exchange* will vary by gender.

5.5.3 Development, Investment & Training

Established insights propose that women are offered less training and development opportunities in the work place than men, and are less likely to be recommended for promotion (Bartol, 1980), despite the fact that women consistently express the desire to learn (Lawrence, 1994).

Hypothesis 3: Ratings of *Development, Investment & Training* will vary by gender.

5.5.4 Flexibility

Published literature suggests that women place greater value on flexibility in the work place, than do men (Sloan and Williams, 2000), so that they might more easily balance home and working life (Collins, 1993), which has been found to be a higher priority for women than men (Golden, 2008).

Hypothesis 4: Ratings of *Flexibility* will vary by gender.

5.5.5 Job Satisfaction

According to Kovach (1987) women tend to value more interesting work, while men value higher pay, which might indicate differences in perceptions of *Job Satisfaction* between the genders. However, other studies, having found no significant differences in relation to *Job Satisfaction* suggest that it is difficult to isolate gender from other factors, such as tenure, and age.

Hypothesis 5: Ratings of *Job Satisfaction* will vary by gender.

5.5.6 Work-Life Balance

Research suggests that even when working full time, women still carry out the majority of domestic duties (Greenstein, 1995; Schwartz and Scott, 2000; Vaananen *et al.* 2008), which plausibly aligns with studies which have found that women struggle more than men in achieving *Work-Life Balance* (Crouter, 1984; Repetti, 1987). There are, however, a smaller number of studies that suggest *Work-Life Balance* might be more difficult for men to achieve due to expectations that home life will not interfere with their work (Pleck, 1977; Duxbury and Higgins, 1991). The weight of published findings seems to suggest that achieving *Work-Life Balance* is more of a challenge for women than men.

Hypothesis 6: Ratings of *Work Life Balance* will vary by gender.

5.5.7 Results

Each of the six factors were analysed against gender using a series of T-tests (see Table 5.4) and (copies of outputs are presented in Appendix N).

Table 5.4. *Summary Calculations for T-test by Gender - P = </0.05*

	Male		Female								
Factor	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	*t*	*df*	*p*	L CI	U CI	$\bar{x}$ df	Eta²
1	69.18	8.542	69.93	8.946	-0.832	315.335	0.406	-2.518	1.022	-.0748	0.002
2	44.65	11.491	44.39	13.025	0.204	296.198	0.839	-2.249	2.768	0.259	1.035
3	41.51	5.860	41.71	6.564	-0.318	402	0.751	-1.434	1.035	-0.200	2.515
4	19.18	4.642	20.26	5.527	-2.023	284.869	0.044	-2.126	-0.029	-1.077	0.010
5	18.10	3.068	17.78	2.959	1.020	402	0.308	-0.293	0.924	0.316	0.002
6	11.88	3.654	14.30	4.600	-5.534	272.641	0.000	-3.272	-1.555	-2.413	0.071

5.5.8 Interpretation of Results

Hypothesis 1: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* showed no significant difference at the </0.05 confidence level between gender cohorts. Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Hypothesis 2: *Leader-Member Exchange* showed no significant difference at the </0.05 confidence level between gender cohorts. Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypothesis 3: *Development, Investment and Training* showed no significant difference at the </0.05 confidence level between gender cohorts. Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Hypothesis 4: *Flexibility* revealed a difference by gender. The magnitude of the effect size was small at $Eta^2=0.010$ (Cohen, 1988) and the sample size was judged as reasonable. It is possible that the power may have been enhanced with a larger sample size. Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Hypothesis 5: *Job Satisfaction* showed no difference at the confidence level between gender cohorts. Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Hypothesis 6: *Work-Life Balance* revealed a significant difference by gender. The effect size in relation to this difference was moderate (Cohen, 1988) at $Eta^2=0.071$. It is possible that this may be increased with larger sample size. Hypothesis 6 was supported.

As with the *Age* and *SES* cohorts, while statistically significant differences were detected for *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance*, the overall picture was of a very similar profile by gender, indicating that men and women ascribe a broadly equivalent profile to the identified variables.

5.6 Discussion

The six factors that emerged from the Principal Components Analysis characterised by 127 items was used as the basis for refining these constructs to produce a set of six proto-scales with acceptable (Alpha>0.70) internal consistency reliability. This permitted a degree of exploration of demographic differences, by gender, SES and age.

5.6.1 Factor 1: Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment

5.6.1.1 Age

It was hypothesized that *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* would show significant difference by age. However, this was not found to be the case. Differences in views relating to attitudes to *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* have been highlighted in a recent review of the literature by Karanika-Murray and Weyman (2013), which suggests that older workers are more inclined to feel that their contribution is not recognised (see also CIPD, 2011) and that "older employees are prone to feel that they are socially marginalised in the workplace, in particular that their skills and experience are under-valued" (pp.33; Weyman *et al.* 2012), while those who do feel valued are less likely to retire early (see also Frederickson, 2006; Smeaton and McKay, 2005). Further research by The Lewin Group (2009) suggests that a failure to value older employees can result in intergenerational tensions. The exploration of this issue revealed little variation in perceptions relating to *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* across the age cohorts (see Table 5.2) and relatively low Standard deviation within each age cohort, indicating little variation in perceptions relating to this facet of QoWL. This finding is consistent with that of Porcellato *et al.* (2010) who found no evidence of discrimination of older employees.

5.6.1.2 Socio-Economic Status

It was hypothesized that *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* would show a significant difference between the three groups. No significant differences between the SES cohorts were apparent and mean scores for this Factor were similar across the three SES groups, with only small increases evident with higher SES and small standard deviations within each SES cohort.

However, some research does suggest differences in certain aspects of the construct explored here, although findings are mixed. Some of the published literature indicates that employees in lower SES employment generally receive less reward and recognition, and as a result express greater dissatisfaction with this aspect of their QoWL (Kalleberg and Griffin, 1978). Other published research however, suggests that those employees with higher levels of education tend to feel less satisfied with the reward and recognition they receive (Clark and Oswald, 1996). In research conducted by Kovach (1978; 1995) employees were asked to rank ten aspects of working life in order of importance, they ranked "interesting work" highest, with "good wages" ranked fifth out of ten and "sympathetic help with personal problems" last. As such, it would appear that extrinsic factors like pay do not necessarily enhance job satisfaction but may contribute to job dissatisfaction if not provided. Intrinsic factors like personal growth

opportunities seem to enhance job satisfaction. Furthermore, Kovach (1987; 1995) found differences in between skilled and unskilled blue collar workers, with unskilled blue collar workers ranking "full appreciation of work done" (i.e. recognition), as most important, while skilled blue collar workers ranked this sixth out of ten.

In Kovach's (1987) study, employees in the lowest income group placed "good wages" in the top position of the ten items. This could be interpreted in relation to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) which suggests that security needs need to be met before higher order needs can be considered. Therefore, those in the lowest income group might be focussed on earning enough money to survive in the first instance, placing higher order (more intrinsic) needs of lower importance as a result. This might also explain research findings that those with higher educational attainment are less satisfied (Clark and Oswald, 1996), as they generally hold higher paid jobs, and as a result can focus on higher order needs (like self-actualisation), creating higher expectations for the organisation to meet.

In light of the findings of Kovach (1987;1995) it might be expected that front line employees rate *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* as having higher salience than their counterparts in supervisory and management positions, but this was not found to be the case in the current study. However, Kovach's (1987) study was conducted twenty-five years ago and it should be noted that the economic and social landscape has changed in that time, and as a result, employee expectations of what they can expect in relation to Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment, has likely also changed. Furthermore, the sample involved in the study was limited only to industrial employees and as such the results cannot be applied to a wider population with confidence. Given that the current study gained responses from a very wide range of industries and sectors may account for the differences in findings.

5.7.6.3 Gender

Research on reward and fair treatment is dominated by work on wage differentials between men and women and non-economic rewards. Furthermore, men and women seem to agree on what makes a good job (Rowe, Reba and Snizek, 1995) and place equal value on pay (Bokemeier and Lacy, 1986), which might be interpreted as broadly supportive of the current study findings, which found no significant differences in perceptions of *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* by gender, returning similar means and relatively low standard deviations within response groups.

However, in contrast to the findings reported here, Kovach (1987) reports that women tend to place greater value on "appreciation of work well done" than men. However, it is possible that the last 25 years have witnessed a reduction in gender differences. Research by Ross and Mirowsky (1996) explored differences in reward between men and women as a possible explanation for why women tend to earn less than their male counterparts in the same roles. Presenting the theory of compensating differentials the authors suggest that women must be getting some additional intrinsic and extrinsic non-economic rewards from their work that men do not, and this compensates for pay differences.

Indeed, Ross and Mirowsky's (1996) research findings suggest that women actually gain a greater sense of psychological well-being than men from higher wages and that women do not get any additional or different non-economic rewards for the work they do than men. Furthermore, recognition was found to have a greater impact on men's sense of control than on women's and a 'thank you' did not increase either gender's psychological well-being. Despite all of this, women get less pay and more thanks than men, according to the authors. While the fact that this research used a national probability sample, thus increasing potential generalisability of results, it must be highlighted that the research was conducted almost twenty years ago and as such may not be representative of today's workplaces. Although Jacobs and Steinberg (1990) suggest that women get paid less because the jobs they choose to be in/are in generally involve more desirable working conditions (non-economic reward of some kind), their research did not actually find this to be the case and the researcher goes on to conclude that "women's work remains significantly undervalued" (p.459). Despite these differences, men and women do not report significantly different attitudes to *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* in the current study.

5.6.2 Factor 2: Leader-Member Exchange

5.6.2.1 Age

Research exploring associations between employee age and their satisfaction with supervision is mixed, with some studies reporting a positive relationship between age and supervision (e.g. Altimus and Tersine 1973; Gibson and Klein, 1970), while others (e.g. Hunt and Saul, 1975) found a U-shaped relationship and still others report no significant relationship (e.g. Muchinsky, 1978; Newman, 1975), as was found to be the case in the current study.

The literature relating *Leader-Member Exchange* and age differences is limited. A number of authors cite cultural differences between age cohorts, Bradford and Raines (1992), for example,

report that younger workers desire leaders rather than managers, in that these younger workers expect a mentoring approach from their manager, rather than a 'command and control' approach to management. This finding is supported by Tulgan (2000) who holds that younger employees desire leaders as mentors to provide feedback to subordinates on their performance, as well as demonstrable trust and respect for employees. Generational Theorists (Strauss and Howe, 1991) suggests that older workers ('The Silent Generation') possess an inherent mistrust of management. Other studies have focused on age differences between supervisor and subordinate, this being said to reduce the quality of task-related communication (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989). Whilst, more recent findings suggest that older workers are more inhibited in making requests of their line manager than younger employees and that managers need to be aware of this and be prepared to take a more proactive approach to management of older employees (Weyman *et al.* 2012; Weyman *et al.* 2013).

5.6.2.2 Socio-Economic Status

It was hypothesised that there would be a difference between SES cohort responses in relation to *Leader-Member Exchange*, this was not found to be the case in the current study. While limited published literature exploring *Leader-Member Exchange* in relation to SES exists, published findings do indicate that the quality of relationship between leader and subordinate has been shown to influence employee turnover intention (Graen *et al.* 1982; Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009; Vecchio, 1982; 1985), while it has also been suggested that greater demographic differences between leader and subordinate results in lower quality communication (Green *et al.* 1996). Employee perceptions of poor leadership have been associated with a higher risk of developing cardiovascular ill-health in later life (Nyberg *et al*. 2009), and the association between low SES and ill-health is long established (see, for example, Marmot, 2004). It could be speculated that the potential impact of poor leadership is greater for those occupying lower SES roles, where leaders have greater impact on the working environment than those employees in higher SES roles who have greater autonomy over their work and their work environment (e.g. employees operating in a production line often have little control over their working environment). In light of this, it was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in score for *Leader-Member Exchange* by SES. While this was not found to be the case in the current research (a finding supported by research by Kocoglu *et al*. 2014), with little variation in perceptions of *LMX* evident across SES cohorts, standard deviation in each cohort was higher than for any other Factor explored by SES, ranging from 11.695 to 12.051, suggesting moderate variation in perceptions across each SES cohort. The findings of the current research might also

reflect the restricted size of the sample, of individuals in in the lowest SES classification (N=42).

5.6.2.3 Gender

Published research indicates differences in the experiences of same and mixed gender leader-member interactions (Green *et al*. 1996) and it was hypothesised that differences would be evident in the current research, however, this hypothesis was not supported.

Quality of exchange has been linked to similarity between leader and subordinate with higher quality exchanges found in same gender pairings (Duchon *et al*. 1986; Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989; Vecchio and Brazil, 2007). Furthermore Green *et al*. (1996), found that quality of communication between leader and employee can be reduced in mixed gender dyads, particularly in the case of women leaders with male subordinates. The interpersonal interaction perspective suggests that men and women will interact in different ways with their male and female superiors, peers and subordinates (Korabik and Ayman, 2007), therefore resulting in different dyadic relationships and exchanges. In their exploration of gender differences and *Leader-Member Exchange* Ayman and Korabik (2010) conclude that "gender can affect access to leadership positions" (p. 162) due to a preference for more masculine, or androgynous characteristics to prevail in the pursuit of leadership positions. Such findings would appear to be at odds with those of the current study, which found no significant difference between men and women in relation to *Leader-Member Exchange.*

It would appear that the interplay between gender and *Leader-Member Exchange* is a complex one, especially in light of the somewhat contradictory findings of the current research with that which has gone before. However, the current findings might be the result of attitudes of men and women in relation to these suggested differences not being influenced for the reasons proposed by Duchon *et al*, (1986) whereby, despite differences being measurable, they are not recognised by the individuals involved in the dyadic relationships.

5.6.3 Factor 3: Development, Investment and Training

5.6.3.1 Age

It was hypothesised that there would be a difference by age cohort in relation to *Development, Investment and Training.* This was not found to be the case, rather it would appear to be at odds with Generational Theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991). If Generational Theory is to be accepted it

would seem logical to expect a significant difference between the 16-25 year-old cohort and those in the 25-50 years and >50years cohorts regarding this construct, as 'Generation Y' is claimed to be more 'global-centric' and team orientated, as well as the most educated of the cohorts. By contrast, 'Generation X' is characterised as 'slackers' prioritising work-life balance and technological knowledge. Whereas 'Baby Boomers' characterised as being more optimistic than their predecessors – the ''Silent Generation'' – but also more focussed on personal gratification. If the Strauss and Howe's characterisation is accepted, it might be predicted that 'Generation Y' (roughly approximate to the 16-25years cohort in the current study, would place a higher value on *Development, Investment and Training* than members of the other cohorts. Age differences relating to *Development, Investment and Training* have been linked to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954), whereby growth need in relation to esteem, autonomy and self-actualisation is thought by some to diminish with age (e.g. Aldag and Brief, 1977; Cook and Wall, 1980; Hackman and Oldham, 1976). It has also been suggested that increasing age leads to decreasing satisfaction with promotions (e.g. Hunt and Saul, 1975; Muchinsky, 1978). Hall and Mirvis (1995) explore the impact of what they term the changing "psychological career contract between employer and employee" (p.271), characterising the new career path as "*protean*", whereby the employee directs their own career rather than it being directed by the organisation as part of a longer term contract. The *protean* career is defined by Hall (1976, 1986) as a "person's own personal career choices and search for self-fulfilment… The criterion for success is internal (psychological success), not external" (p.271; Hall and Mirvis, 1995). According to the authors this may be daunting for the older worker who is forced to develop new skills, which may be detrimental to the employee's self-esteem and confidence. The authors' proposed solution is a move away from training towards continuous learning – essentially on the job training – with colleagues. Whilst it may be that older workers might prefer alternative methods of training to younger employees; a reliance solely on on-the-job training and computer based self-assessment is at odds with the feedback from a range of aged employees in Study 1 of the current research who were opposed to online training and assessment and felt it to be over used at the expense of face-to-face training courses.

Not all authors report differences in esteem, autonomy and self-actualisation by age in relation to *Development, Investment and Training*, for example, Katz (1978) and Warr *et al*. (1979) who found no age differences. A similarly mixed picture emerges when examining existing literature with regards age and promotion with some (e.g. Altimus and Tersine, 1973; Newman, 1975), finding no relationship between age and promotion satisfaction, in accordance with the findings of the current study.

The fact that no significant differences were found in the current study may be due to the inability to break the data down further; e.g. by life course and SES due to small sample sizes. Perhaps, had it been possible to look at both demographics, a clearer picture with regards *Development, Investment and Training* might have become apparent. What is clear however is that degree of training undertaken decreases with age but it is unclear as to whether this is a result of the more inhibited older worker not asking for the training they desire, or due to a general lack of interest on the behalf of the older worker in engaging in further training (Weyman *et al,* 2013).

5.6.3.2 Socio-Economic Status

It was hypothesised that there would be a difference between SES groups in relation to Development, Investment and Training. This hypothesis was not supported. In light of Kovach's (1987;1995) findings that lower SES employees tend to rank "good wages" and "job security" highest of the ten job motivators presented and, higher SES employees ranked "interesting work" nearer the top of their ranking of the ten constructs, it was hypothesised that there would be a significant difference between the responses of the three SES cohorts in relation to *Development, Investment and Training,* with those in higher SES cohorts placing greater emphasis on these aspects of QoWL. However, this did not prove to be the case.

Published literature indicates that access to training and development opportunities in the workplace are unequally distributed in favour of employees with higher general educational attainment/qualifications (Green *et al*. 2012), although whether this is because employees who have previously sought education continue to do so throughout their working lives and therefore seek more educational and development opportunities, or if it is because the opportunities are genuinely imbalanced, is difficult to determine. It might be that in relation to the other aspects explored in the questionnaire that this was of lower importance relatively and subsequently differences were not apparent as respondents prioritised other aspects of QoWL above *Development, Investment and Training.* A thorough exploration of *Development, Investment and Training* and its impact on QoWL relative to SES is necessary to better understand the interplay of these constructs.

5.6.3.3 Gender

Published literature indicates that training and development opportunities are less available to female employees (Probert, cited in Boud and Garrick (eds.), 2001), leading women to seek educational advancement outside of the workplace. As such, it was hypothesised that ratings of *Development, Investment and Training* would vary by gender. This was not found to be the case in the current research. Much of the literature relating to *Development, Investment and Training* relates to the impact of mentoring on employee outcomes, rather than access to training more generally. As far back as 1977, Phillips (cited, Hunt and Michael, 1983) proposed that the majority of women in top level management positions had benefited from mentoring relationships earlier in their careers that helped get them to the top. Although Hunt and Michael (1983) comment that it can be challenging for women to find a suitable mentor due to the minority of women in high level positions, which seems to suggest that women protégé's require women mentors. Noe (1988) suggests that without a mentor women find it difficult to understand the often male-dominated organisational culture within which they wish to progress.

Probert (Boud and Garrick (eds.), 2001) purports that opportunities for women to learn at work are ascribed on the basis of employer perceptions of the potential return on the training investment, yet women consistently express interest in opportunities to learn at work (Lawrence, 1994), which would suggest this construct might have higher salience for women. Women have increasingly moved into roles which require high levels of expertise they have gained outside of the organisation but are still under represented in positions of authority which, Savage (1992) suggests is a result of women being prevented from obtaining the relevant credentials through the organisation.

Given the scarcity of literature in relation to *Development, Investment and Training* and the fact that the literature uncovered is somewhat dated, the findings of this study provide some much needed insight into this aspect of QoWL, although it is recognised that further enquiry is warranted.

5.6.4 Factor 4: Flexibility

5.6.4.1 Age

Significant differences between the 16-25 year old cohort, the 25-50 year old cohort and 50^{+}years cohorts were hypothesized in respect of the published findings and this was found to be the case (p=0.016, *LCI*= 19.10; *UCI*=20.08), with the 16-25 year olds indicating higher

levels of agreement with the items relating to this factor, indicating that this cohort perceived that they have greater *Flexibility* at work than the 25-50 year olds and those aged >50 years. According to Hall and Mirvis (1995), "flexibility and autonomy are made for the older worker" (p.272), as the constraints of family and career advancement are no longer the key drivers in their career choices. The exception to this is flexibility of location and in particular, working from home, as many older employees seek social interaction through their work experiences according to the authors. A number of studies and reviews (e.g. Smeaton *et al*, 2009; Watson *et al*, 2003; Weyman *et al*, 2012) suggest that older employees value greater flexibility of work such that they may care for elderly relatives and attend to their own health conditions, yet the findings of the current study would indicate that they perceive they have less *Flexibility* than the 16-25yrs cohort. Evidence in relation to shift work and the potential flexibility that this might offer is mixed with some research suggesting it to be particularly detrimental to older employees (e.g. Kawada, 2002; Saksvig *et al*. 2011), while others found no evidence of this (e.g. Farrow and Reynolds, 2012).

However, the degree to which older employees actually take advantage of opportunities for flexibility at work is questionable, particularly with regard to those aged 50^{+} years, where research suggests that older employees feel inhibited in asking for greater flexibility for fear it may be perceived by the organisation as lack of commitment on their part (Weyman *et al*, 2013), which may offer an explanation of the current study findings. This inhibition may reflect claims made by proponents of Generational Theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991) who characterise the ''Silent Generation'' as more wary and distrustful of management than later generations and as a result less likely to make requests of them. The lower perceived *Flexibility* of the 25-50 year old cohort is more difficult to explain, with the literature focussing either on young recruits (e.g. Super and Hall, 1978) or older employees (e.g. Herman *et al*, 1975); moreover, this research focused more on work satisfaction than *Flexibility*. Further exploration is required in order to unpick the precise reasons for these age cohort differences such that organisations can take account of them.

5.6.4.2 Socio-Economic Status

The current study hypothesised that ratings of *Flexibility* would vary by SES and significant differences between front line employees and those in the supervisor and management roles were evident in the current research (p=0.008, *LCI*=19.10; *UCI*=20.08), with those in the front line indicating significantly lower levels of agreement with items relating to *Flexibility* than their higher SES colleagues. In their study exploring "Work stress, socio-economic status and

neuroendocrine activation over the working day" Kunz-Ebrecht *et al.* (2004) found physiological evidence of differences in the stress levels of different levels of employee. The authors took saliva samples from 97 men and 84 women from higher and lower grade civil servant roles from the Whitehall II cohort. Saliva samples taken upon waking were higher in cortisol levels in instances where the individual was experiencing high job demand but this effect was decreased with higher SES. Lower SES women who were subject to higher job demand were found to have elevated cortisol levels throughout the day. In men job control acted as an attenuating factor on cortisol levels over the course of the day, although job control did not affect cortisol levels in men when measured upon waking. This could be interpreted as a result of increased or decreased autonomy and flexibility, whereby greater autonomy and flexibility counteracts job demand to some degree as a result of the employees' greater sense of personal control of their work situation. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the sample upon which Kunz-Ebrecht *et al*. (2004) based their study was taken from the Whitehall 2 study and comprised only of civil servants in London, thus limiting the potential generalisability of findings.

However, as with the previous variable life course, there is little research that compares QoWL variables at different levels of SES or job grade and so the hypothesis relating to the factor *Flexibility* was made on the basis of conjecture that those in front line roles might be less concerned with flexibility and work-life balance due to the nature of those roles generally being more bound to a specific location and dependent upon fixed working hours e.g. store opening hours for the retail assistant. The hypothesis was also made on the basis of the information gathered in the first qualitative study which seemed to indicate that even where front line employees would like greater flexibility and work-life balance, there was an underlying element of acceptance that it was not possible in their role e.g. Miners accepted that their role involved them being below ground for the full shift; and front line Recruitment Consultants, whilst expressing a desire for greater flexibility, seemed to accept that it did not come with the role.

Lack of *Flexibility* in relation to SES might become more of an issue as an employee ages, as research suggests that those with the lowest SES are subjected to the greatest push to retire earlier due to limited flexible working opportunities (Weyman *et al*. 2009) as a consequence of the type of work they do (often manual and dependent upon physical health). The current analysis revealed significant differences between the front line employee cohort and those in supervisory and management positions with higher SES, which would appear to be supported by findings of Kunz-Ebrecht *et al*. (2004) and more recently, Weyman *et al*. (2009). This could be as a result of higher SES employees having greater flexibility and autonomy and a greater

sense of control over their workload (see Van der Doef and Maes, 1999), while lower SES employees work fixed hours in a fixed location with little or no flexibility and no opportunity to gain greater flexibility and autonomy.

5.6.4.3 Gender

It was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in relation to attitudes to *Flexibility* between men and women as women work to balance paid employ and family life. *Flexibility* did produce a significant difference in the current study (p=0.044, *LCI*=-2.126; *UCI*=-0.029). Published findings indicates that women tend to desire flexible working to a greater degree than men (Sloan and Williams, 2000) so that they might balance work and family duties more easily (Collins, 1993) and the ability to work more flexibly was found to be a greater motivator for women than men (Beasley *et al.* 2001). Telecommuting allows for greater time with family (Grantham and Paul, 1995) with women more motivated by the opportunity to telecommute in order to spend more time with children than men. Furthermore, the ability to spend more time with a spouse was found to be a marginally more significant motivator for women than men (Beasley *et al.* 2001). McCrate (2005) also found that options to work flexibly were more important to women than men.

Inflexibility of work schedule has also been cited as a main reason for not having enough time to spend with family and was a higher priority for women than men (Golden, 2001). While greater flexibility of work schedule and hours was cited as one thing that would make their lives better by 15% of women questioned by the Gallup Organisation for Women (2000) study. However, it has been suggested that women actually have less opportunity to participate in flexible working scheduling (McCrate 2005; Swanberg *et al.* 2005). Where flexibility is available, it would appear that women utilise it for spending more time with family, while men tend to work longer hours (Sullivan and Lewis, 2001). The current study presents an up-to-date picture of attitudes relating to this construct and, despite low sample power in relation to the testing of differences by gender, there would appear to be some evident differences in attitudes to *Flexibility.* This issue would likely benefit from further exploration.

5.6.5 Factor 5: Work-Life Balance

5.6.5.1 Age

Theories relating to age and *Work-Life Balance* are conflicting in nature. Generational Theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991) posits that 'Generation Xers' (25-50years cohort) - characterised as 'slackers' are inclined to prioritise *Work-Life Balance* along with the 'Baby Boom Generation' (25-50 year old cohort) characterised as being more optimistic than their predecessors – the ''Silent Generation'' (50^{+}years cohort) – but also more focussed on personal gratification. More recently, Woodward (2000) suggests that younger workers are more likely to desire greater *Work-Life Balance* having watched their parents work hard to get ahead only to be laid off in difficult times, while Weyman, Meadows and Buckingham (2013) suggest that it is older workers who desire greater *Work-Life Balance* in order to spend time with elderly relatives or grandchildren and enjoy a more relaxed pace.

It was hypothesized that there would be a difference between age cohorts in relation to *Work-Life Balance* and this was found to be the case (p=0.000, *LCI*=12.39; *UCI*=13.21) with the 16-25 year old cohort, indicating higher agreement with the items relating to this factor than the two older cohorts (25-50 years and 50^{+}years). According to ONS (2011) data, average age for marriage in the UK is 25 years, at which point a couple may also be considering buying a home and starting a family, which may have the effect of higher value being placed in non-work activity. Poor *Work-Life Balance* has been associated with marital difficulties (Crouter *et al.* 1989; Matthews *et al*. 2006) and the withdrawal from family life and relationships (Padon and Buehler, 1995; Repetti and Wood, 1997) as employees try to meet high work demands at the cost of time with family. Yet, this might present a source of tension for an employee wishing to provide for a growing family.

As posited by Weyman *et al*. (2013) the older age cohort (50^{+}years) might desire greater *Work-Life Balance* in order to care for family members, whether old or young. Older workers may also desire greater *Work-Life Balance* through reduced working hours as a result of on-going health conditions. It has been suggested that reduced hours for older workers results in lower rates of absenteeism and higher likelihood of return to work following sickness (Kilbom, 1999), but Weyman *et al*. (2012) suggest there is little evidence to support this assertion. What has been indicated however, is that older employees tend to be inhibited in asking for flexible or working arrangements, reduced hours or reduced responsibility (down-shifting) to enhance their *Work-Life Balance* ambitions, for fear that this will be interpreted by their employer as a lack of

commitment to their work (Weyman *et al*. 2013). This may account for the lower perceived *Work-Life Balance* within this cohort.

It is recognised that the fact that the under 25s and the 50^{+} cohorts contained only a small number of respondents (N=30 and N=44 respectively). However, when considering the best way to divide the data into life course cohorts, a number of factors were taken into consideration. With reference to ONS (2011) data and within the confines of needing to keep the number of groupings to three or fewer as a result of the modest data set, it was concluded that this split of life course cohorts was most appropriate/logical. Furthermore, when considered in relation to the significant events in peoples' lives, the potential impact they might have on their attitudes to working life, as well as the resulting evolution of their aspirations (both personally and professionally), the life course cohorts seemed most representative of average life stages.

A consideration with regards age and QoWL is the difficulty in isolating the associations relating directly to age and the possible direct or indirect influences of tenure, salary, organisational level and other related extrinsic rewards that come with it (e.g. Gibson and Klein, 1970; Hertzberg *et al*. 1959; Porter and Lawler, 1965). Furthermore, it is impossible to control for cohort effects, which can threaten internal validity when the focus is on age effects (Rhodes, 1983). Factors such as economic depression, war, women's movements, general educational level etc. can all impact a cohort and, in turn, influence work-place attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, what might on the surface appear to be age effects may in fact be cohort effects.

5.6.5.2 Socio-Economic Status

Recent research by GfK NOP (2009) found that managers and employees ranked *'having the right balance between their/my personal life and their/my home life'* in similar positions out of ten QoWL related items in forth and third positions respectively. However, research by Schieman *et al*. (2006) found that negative work/home spillover was greater for employees in higher status roles. The authors suggest that this is as a result of greater responsibility in such roles than one might have in a blue collar occupation. This would appear to contradict the literature relating to job demand and stress, which proposes that greater autonomy and control act as a mediating factor to higher job stress and demand (e.g. Karasek, 1979). Typically blue collar occupations offer little autonomy and control, while higher status white collar roles tend to offer greater control, flexibility and autonomy. This would suggest that it should, in fact, be blue collar workers who suffer most with imbalance between work and home life. In light of this contradictory evidence, it was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference

between *Work-life Balance* scores for those in the front line cohort compared with those in supervisory and management cohorts. This hypothesis was supported (p=0.000, *LCI*=12.39; *UCI*=13.21) with those in managerial roles indicating lower agreement with items relating to this factor, suggesting lower perceived levels of *Work-Life Balance*.

Research has implicated difficulty in finding suitably qualified replacements (Kohn and Slomczynski, 1990) and higher levels of commitment to their professional identity (Schieman *et al*. 2006) as being cause for higher level employees struggling to balance work and home life to the point of higher rates of presenteeism as a result. Vaananen *et al*. (2008) found that high level women in white collar roles experienced frequent negative work-family spillover and that this negative spillover was more generally predictive of sickness absence. Their findings are consistent with other research that suggests that negative work-family spillover presents health risks (Bellavia and Frone, 2005; Grzywacz and Marks, 2000). However, Vaananen *et al*. (2008) also found negative work-family spillover to be associated with increased sickness absence in blue collar and lower level white collar employees, a phenomenon they suggest might be the result of higher earning families having the extra income to hire domestic help and reduce the conflict work presents.

Research in relation to *Work-Life Balance* tends to focus on the effects of shift work (e.g. Carlson *et al*. 2000) and the effects of working long hours on health and safety (e.g. Cooper, 1996). Long working hours have also been associated with detriment to various aspects of psychological health (e.g. Borg and Kristensen, 1999) and to work-family conflict (Shamir and Salomon, 1985; Jahoda, 1982). However, little research has explored *Work-Life Balance* in relation to SES. Long working hours combined with low job reward have been associated with adverse effects on work-family relationships, but it appears that it is the perception of the reward that determines the adverse effect, not the hours worked. If this is the case, higher level employees might work long hours but suffer less detrimental effects on work-life balance as a result of having greater capacity to employ domestic help and receiving greater reward for their efforts (Vaananen *et al*. 2008). Overall, published findings present a mixed picture in relation to SES and *Work-Life Balance.* Findings from the current study lend support to those cited by authors such as Kohn and Slomczynski (1990) and Schieman *et al*. (2006), but contrast with others (see, for example, GfK NOP, 2009; Karasek, 1979). The power of the effect size in relation to this factor is large however, which would indicate confidence in the current findings.

5.6.5.3 Gender

The hypothesis that ratings of *Work-Life Balance* would vary by gender was supported (*p*=0.000, *LCI*=-3.272; *UCI*=-1.555). In relation to why it seems that *Work-Life Balance* is a key factor to emerge from the above analyses, White *et al*. (2003) state that "it is widely known that full-time workers in Britain work the longest hours in the European Union. British men work an average of 3.5 hours per week more than those in the country with the second longest average working week (Greece), while British women work 0.8 hours per week longer than the country to work the second highest number of average hours per week (Sweden)" (cited from *Social Trends* 2001 in White *et al.* 2003). As such, it would follow that *Work-Life Balance* might be important factors in QoWL, but also with regards satisfying the demands of home/family life. White *et al*. (2003) did find however that "taking part in a flexible hours system significantly reduced negative spillover for women…while making no difference either way to men" (p189), where the authors use the term 'negative spillover' as a more specific term to describe the negative aspects of work-life balance. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in attitudes of male and female respondents in relation to *Work-Life Balance* and this was found to be the case in the current study. This would seem to be consistent with research suggesting that women in dual earner couples still carry out the majority of domestic duties, which can result in marital difficulty (Greenstein, 1995; Schwartz and Scott, 2000). Research by Vaananen *et al*. (2008) found that 35 % of women reported having most of the responsibility for domestic duties, as compared with 22% of men.

Increasingly women are going out to work and this creates conflict in relation to work-life balance and negative spillover in the home as they try to balance both (Duxbury and Higgins, 1991). In 1979 Holahan and Gilbert suggested that traditional societal expectations can put greater stress on women trying to balance work and family as they struggle to meet these expectations in the 'non-traditional' role of employee. This view was supported by Burke and McKeen in 1988. For women, work and family roles are not supportive, according to Barnett and Baruch (1987) as family obligations require the availability of wife/mother and the work environment does not take account of these obligations. Therefore, it is likely women will feel a greater sense of conflict between the two.

A number of studies have suggested that negative spillover from work to family life is greater for women (e.g. Crouter, 1984; Repetti, 1987). While a small number suggest that the negative spillover is stronger for men because it is more acceptable for work to interfere with family life (Pleck, 1977). Societal expectations for men, whereby they are expected not to let family life

interfere with work, has been implicated in this increased negative spillover (Duxbury and Higgins, 1991).

Conflict at work has been associated with work-family conflict and it would appear that there is a stronger relationship between work-family conflict and QoWL for women than for men (Duxbury and Higgins, 1991), a conclusion echoed by Bartol (1980). It would appear that there are differences in the degree to which *Work-Life Balance* is affected for men and women, but in light of the fact that much of the research is now dated and in consideration of changing economic and social climates that likely impact upon men and women in the workforce, as well as societal attitudes to the roles of men and women with regards work and home, further enquiry would undoubtedly shed more light on the matter.

5.6.6 Factor 6 Job Satisfaction

5.6.6.1 Age

By far the greatest number of studies relating age to QoWL focus on *Job Satisfaction* although, the conclusions are homogenous. It was hypothesised that ratings of *Job Satisfaction* would vary by age; however, this hypothesis was not supported. Glenn *et al*. (1977) suggest that younger employees tend to have more qualifications than their older counterparts and this in itself might raise the expectations of the younger cohort and as a result, impact negatively on their levels of job satisfaction in line with these expectations. However, extrinsic rewards tend to increase with educational attainment and should increase job satisfaction. Extrinsic rewards also tend to increase with tenure, even when educational attainment is controlled for (Glenn *et al*. 1977). Research relating to age and *Job Satisfaction* dates right back to the early 1900s when Fryer (1927) reported finding no significant difference in job satisfaction between different aged men, followed by the findings of Kornhauser and Sharp (1932) who found no correlation between age and job satisfaction in women. Hoppock (1936) suggested that rather than job satisfaction increasing with age, job dissatisfaction actually decreases as employees either leave a job they are dissatisfied in, accept "the unavoidable reality of life" (p.117) or gain pleasure as a result.

A number of studies have found a positive relationship between age and *Job Satisfaction* (e.g. Stagner, 1975; Staines and Quinn, 1979; Weaver, 1980) but some, in line with the findings of the current study, have also found no relationship between the two (e.g. Aldag and Brief, 1977; Weaver, 1980). In light of such conflicting results, it was hypothesized that there would be no difference in responses to questionnaire items related to *Job Satisfaction* and this was found to

be the case. It has been noted (e.g. Glenn *et al*, 1977) that differentiating age and tenure can be difficult and this may well muddy the waters when seeking to establish if there exists any difference in *Job Satisfaction* by age. In contrast with findings from the current study, Gibson and Klein (1970) did find a positive relationship between age and *Job Satisfaction* when controlling for tenure, as well as by association when controlling for job level and income, although this was only for male respondents. Female respondents showed positive association between tenure and *Job Satisfaction* rather than age (Hunt and Saul, 1975).

The impact of age on *Job Satisfaction* presents a rather confused picture and in respect of the current findings this might be the result of small sample size. Hoppock (1936) suggests that early conflicting findings are the result of unrepresentative samples that failed to include a range of ages and occupations and that may well also be the case here. Furthermore, studies like that of Glenn *et al*. (1977) explore only intrinsic and extrinsic influences on job satisfaction rather than breaking these facets down into their constituent parts, thus making it impossible to determine which intrinsic or extrinsic factors are having an influence and leaving open the possibility that the effect of one constituent part might have an impact that is being cancelled out by the others it is grouped with. They argue that it is actually these extrinsic factors that influence job satisfaction rather than age itself, due to the fact that with age one tends to accumulate more extrinsic job rewards that can contribute to higher satisfaction. Regardless of the rather opaque picture relating to age and *Job Satisfaction,* findings from the current study would appear to support the published literature dating back to the 1920s and it would seem that the similarities between cohorts are greater than the differences.

5.6.6.2 Socio-Economic Status

Published literature suggests that professionals and managers report higher levels of *Job Satisfaction* than blue collar workers but also report a greater dissatisfaction with pay (Clark, 1996). Early research relating to *Job Satisfaction* by Weiss (1955) asked workers if they would continue to work if they no longer required the income. Those in white collar jobs indicated that they found their work interesting and would miss this, while blue collar workers commented on the loss of activity should they no longer have to work. Blauner (1960) found that job satisfaction ratings decline with job grade and level of skill. Later research by Parker (1983) found that satisfaction at work can be achieved through the creation of something and the use of skill, while dissatisfaction results from engaging in repetitive work, and work that is perceived to be of little or no use. More recently, Sprigg and Jackson (2006) explored the impact of the degree of scripting and performance monitoring in call centre environments, finding that less

autonomy (in terms of more scripted, repetitive work) resulted in higher levels of job strain and reduced job satisfaction. In light of such findings it was hypothesised that there would be a significant difference between SES cohorts in relation to *Job Satisfaction*, this hypothesis was not supported.

Kovach (1987; 1995), in a comparison of how employees at different levels in an organisation rank a number of work related items, found that those employees at higher levels in the organisation rated "interesting work" top of their list, while the lowest level employees ranked "good wages" and "job security" as most important, highlighting the proposition that an absence of these basic needs results in dissatisfaction, while the presence of them does not necessarily enhance satisfaction; although interestingly, unskilled white collar workers rated "interesting work" most important. In relation to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), it would follow that employees of the lowest SES would place greater emphasis on pay and job security as they struggle to pay the bills, while those in the more senior positions, with higher SES – knowing that they earn enough to pay the bills – might focus on their 'higher order' needs; those relating to intrinsic *Job Satisfaction*. It has further been suggested that promotion opportunities are a strong predictor of job satisfaction, and these tend to be more available to those with higher SES (Clark, 1996). It should be noted, however, that Kovach's research was conducted up to 1986 and only on a population of industrial employees and as such has limited generalisability beyond that population.

However, despite published findings indicating there would be a significant difference between SES cohorts; it was not evident from the analysis of the current data. Small sample sizes may have attenuated differences between cohorts, but it does appear again, that similarities between cohorts are greater than differences.

5.6.6.3 Gender

It was hypothesised that ratings of *Job Satisfaction* would vary between male and female respondents but this hypothesis was not supported. In contrast with the current findings, a number of authors report differences with regards what influences *Job Satisfaction* in men and women. Extrinsic rewards have been found to increase job satisfaction in men (Glenn *et al.* 1977), but not women, while men tend to value interesting work more highly than women according to Kovach (1987). Clark (1996) found that two thirds of women reported overall *Job Satisfaction* as compared with just over half of men. Clark (1996) suggests this difference might be due to the different employment roles men and women tend to undertake or different expectations and reference groups for women. However, younger women and those with higher

educational attainment or in professional jobs tend to report *Job Satisfaction* levels more in line with those of their male counterparts.

A positive relationship between *Job Satisfaction* and age has been found by some for men, but results for women are mixed (Glenn *et al*. 1977; Hunt and Saul, 1975; Weaver, 1978). Hunt and Saul (1975) suggest that this might be as a result of tenure rather than age however, but the two are difficult to differentiate in terms of their contribution, as those with long tenure will always be older members of the workforce. Work-life conflict has been implicated as having a negative impact on *Job Satisfaction* (Burke, 1986; Kopelman *et al*. 1983; Repetti, 1987) and research suggests that the impact is greater for women trying to juggle work and family life (Duxbury and Higgins, 1991). Flexible working increases job satisfaction for both men and women, but again the benefits appear to be more salient to women than men (Grantham and Paul, 1995; Spillman and Markham, 1997).

5.7 Summary

In summary, the research intent was to explore the scope for further development of the identified subscales into a tool that was aligned with the established Management Standards tradition (HSE, 2009) that might be used by employers as part of a proactive, informed approach to addressing QoWL issues that were capable of highlighting organisational strengths and weaknesses in this area. Chapter 4 detailed how a large battery of QoWL related items (N=127) were refined to produce a stable six factor structure: with components labelled as *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction* and *Work-Life Balance*. The current chapter details how the core item set to emerge from the Factor Analysis conducted in Study 2a (Chapter 4) and comprised of 76 items was further refined (to 45 items; see Appendix O) as a product of the scale development process.

5.8 Conclusions

- The factors identified in Study 2 appear to be refined into constructs with acceptable internal consistency.
- The constructs appear to have some capacity to discriminate between different groups of individuals.
- There is a degree of support for the conclusion that a shared demographic reflects common experience/orientation to variables that contribute to QoWL; notably with respect to the availability of flexible working arrangements and work-life balance preferences. However, the overriding picture is one of greater similarity than social difference, at least with respect to the demographics explored. A caveat to this finding relates to the uneven sample sizes and relatively small samples for certain segments. The restricted sample size also limited the scope for a more sophisticated multivariate analysis, which would have been desirable. A larger sample would support a more sophisticated analysis of a larger number of demographic variables that should extend to the deification of predictive relationships.
- The sample power relating to the test of differences in relation to the factor *Flexibility* when examined by age, SES and gender was low. However, the power for testing it in relation to *Work-Life Balance* and age, SES and gender, was moderate to high, despite the modest sample size of some groups. The fact that these two factors emerged with significant differences across all three (age, SES and gender) demographic groupings provides a degree of confidence in these findings, particularly, in relation to the moderate-high Eta^2 results in the case of the factor *Work-Life Balance*. The potential for larger samples to reveal further differences cannot be discounted.
- The proto-scales used to explore differences would benefit from further refinement and development. Specifically, the six factor model would benefit from verification using a confirmatory factor analysis based on a second sample of respondents. The construct scales would need to be subjected to retest verification, to test their capacity to elicit stable responses, as well as formal testing to establish there discriminant properties.

Chapter 6: Study 3 - Exploring the Relative Salience of Components of Quality of Working Life

6.0 Summary

In recognition of limited published findings on the relative salience of variables identified as impacting on QoWL, the study reported in this chapter details an exploration of employee perspectives. In particular, it sought to inform comment on the degree of homogeneity/heterogeneity that characterised employee perspectives.

Acknowledging the limitations of direct ranking, particularly in the area of reproducibility reliability, due to the high cognitive load individuals experience in ranking a relatively large number multi-faceted phenomena (Ostberg 1980; Cromer *et al.* 1984, Walker *et al.* 1998), combined with the desire to explore within and between group differences, a development of Thurstone's Case V method of Paired Comparisons was applied (see Sjoberg, 1967). Following the general Case V method, participants were presented with all permutations of pairings for a set of QoWL components, and asked to indicate which item in each case they considered the more important influence on their QoWL.

Findings revealed that individuals produced consistent, reliable within-respondent rankings for the set of items. However, there was modest agreement over relative salience between respondents, across the sample as a whole (where the term *salience* refers to the perceived significance/prominence of an aspect relating to QoWL of the respondent/respondents). Beyond this, moderate levels of concordance were found within each of a number of demographic sub-samples. It is concluded that the selected QoWL components were meaningful to respondents and people made consistent judgements regarding their relative salience (impact on QoWL). The evidence of differences at the level of rank order are interpreted as suggestive of either/or orientational/dispositional differences associated with choice of occupation (i.e. QoWL priorities impact on occupation choice), or situational elements relating to shared job characteristics and plausibly, shared workplace experience impact on the relative salience/value placed upon QoWL variables by employees.

6.1 Introduction

Studies one and two explored and expanded upon established insights into variables impacting on QoWL (see Chapters 3 and 4, respectively). This third study aimed to establish whether individuals make reliable distinctions between the identified components, and the extent to which individuals exhibited a shared perspective over their relative salience.

Published findings present an expansive array of QoWL related components (see, for example Dejoy *et al.* 2010; Ingelgard and Norrgren, 2001; Kahn, 1992; Lau, 2000; Meyer *et al.* 2002; Shoaf *et al.*2004; Slaski and Cartright, 2002; Somers, 2010; for a detailed exposition and also see Chapter 2: Literature Review), a high proportion of which were echoed in empirical findings from Studies 1 and 2.

A characteristic of previous QoWL studies is that they have tended to be limited in terms of either the range of variables explored (e.g. Choo and Bowley, 2007; Crouter *et al.* 2001; Gestner and Day, 1997), the types of organisations/employment sectors studied (e.g. Brown *et al.* 1993; Bushardt and Fretwell, 1994; Cole *et al.* 2005); or focused on discrete sub-populations (e.g. Bartol, 1980; Duxbury and Higgins, 1991). As a result, the question of the extent to which employees share a common perspective on QoWL represents a notable gap in the literature. This is an important question, particularly from the perspective of intervention by employers, as greater understanding here would afford insight over whether a universal, segmented or individual approach to intervention might yield greater impact.

6.1.1 Context and Relevance to Main Study

A number of QoWL related studies have explored demographic groups with the aim of establishing homogeneity or differences including age (Hoppock, 1935; Glenn, 1977; Spector, 1987; Weyman *et al.* 2013), gender (Bartol, 1980; Grover and Crooker, 1995; Scandura, 1997; Sloane, 2000) and employment sector (Blunt and Spring, 1991; Buelens and Broeck, 2007; Karl and Sutton, 1998) amongst others, but these studies have focussed on specific aspects of QoWL rather than an embracing array of variables. Perspectives on demographic differences with respect to the relative importance of QoWL have tended to be limited to age cohort differences and gender differences. Strauss and Howe (1991), for example claim that, what they characterise as the ‘‘Silent Generation’’ (born 1925-1942), prioritise work life above home life, while ‘Generation Xers’ (born 1960s – early 1980s) are said to demand greater work-life balance. Similarly, authors such as Greenhaus *et al.* (1989) report gender differences in work-

life balance preferences, with women experiencing greater work versus family conflict than men. However, no previous studies of how the profile (relative salience) of QoWL components might vary between segments within a given work organisation exist, e.g. by job type, job role or grade and/or effects attributable to the socio-technical climate. Understanding the nature and extent of demographic differences in the primacy of QoWL components is important from the perspectives of public policy and employer intervention.

Evidence of universality is potentially attractive to employers, not least in terms of the level of resource dedicated to addressing QoWL. Conversely, understanding differences demographically, would allow organisations to reap the benefits of a more bespoke QoWL intervention. The current study sought to gain insight into how employees rank items relating to QoWL. In assessing how such a component might be measured and ranked, it was necessary to recognise and consider the subjectivity of the subject. The fact that there is modest consensus within published research with regards the core components considered to enhance or erode QoWL is testament to this (see Chapter 2: Literature Review).

As previously articulated to date, most studies have focussed on gathering attitudinal data derived through quantitative surveys (e.g. Breaugh, 1985; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2006; Finn, 2001; Ingelgard and Norrgren, 2001; Morrow and McElroy, 1987; Wayne *et al.* 2002; White and Spector, 1987), and occasionally mixed methods approaches (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown, 1997). There has seemingly been little attempt to systematically compare the degree of similarity/difference between individuals and groups regarding the relative salience of the components of QoWL.

The only known previous attempt is limited to an unpublished study funded by the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (Young, *et al.* 2011 available on request from the HSE) where, as a component of a wider survey a sample of employees (N=977) were asked to rank nine QoWL related items. This was supplemented by a sample of managers (N=1026) being asked to rank the same set of items on the basis of what they believed the relative importance of components were to their employees.

A notable finding of the HSE (2011) study was a marked contrast between what managers thought their employees valued most and the order assigned to the items by the employees themselves. Employees ascribed greatest importance to intrinsic job satisfaction, *"Liking the actual work I do*", social relations, *"Getting on well with colleagues"* and work-life balance, *"Having the right balance between my personal life and my work life"* (their top three items, respectively). By contrast, their managers ascribed mid-range or low ranks to these variables.

A potential limitation of the HSE study, however, related to the use of direct ranking. Beyond issues of cognitive load and associated undesirable impacts on reproducibility, direct ranking is limited in so far as it produces a simple aggregated ordinal scale that provides no insight into the relative distance between the items.

6.1.1.1 Aim

- to explore employee perspectives on the relative salience of variables identified as contributing to QoWL.

6.1.1.2 Objectives

- to identify and define a set of items contributing to QoWL that were applicable to the majority of employees;
- to determine the degree to which individuals exhibit consistency in ranking features of QoWL;
- to assess the degree of concordance between individuals with regard to the order they ascribed to the item set and, any related patterns of demographic variably;
- determine whether the degree of importance ascribed to QoWL is prone to vary between different segments of the labour force.

6.1.2 Hypotheses

- study 1 and 2 (a and b) findings would indicate that the headline components of QoWL identified are meaningful to employees (see Chapters 3, 4 and 5);
- the high occurrence of some themes across focus groups/one-to-one interviews in Study 1 [e.g. *Work-Life Balance* (100%), *Camaraderie* (97%), *Flexibility and Choice* (89%)], and the significant differences across all demographic cohorts relating to *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance* might indicate that some components of QoWL are of greater salience to employees than others;

- the high degree of parity in QoWL related factors discussed in the focus groups/one-to-one interviews (see Chapter 3: Study 1) would indicate that perspectives on QoWL reflect shared orientations to/experience of work.

6.2 Method

6.2.1 Participants

Mirroring the approach to sampling adopted in Study 2, participants constituted an opportunity sample, recruited from the work organisations that participated in Study 1 and via social networking sites (*Facebook* and *LinkedIn*) for a period of eight weeks from October – December 2012. While a stratified quota sample would have been desirable, this was not possible with the resources available. However, the approach adopted was effective in providing a sample of respondents from an embracing array of employment sectors (public and private), occupations and grades, as well as gender and age group (N=234; See Appendix O – Ethics Approval Information). Critically, it was sufficiently populated to permit formal testing of a range of demographic differences (Table 6.1), and to address the core question surrounding the degree of concordance between individuals over the relative salience of components of QoWL.

Table 6.1. *Demographic Breakdowns of Respondents*

Demographic Grouping	Demographic Breakdown	No. of Respondents
Gender	Male	56
	Female	49
Age	20-29	8
	30-39	46
	40-49	30
	50-65	21
Socio Economic Status (SES)	Semi-skilled/Unskilled	37
	Supervisor/Technical	33
	Senior Manager/Director	10
Sector	Public	88
	Private	54

6.2.2 Design

The method employed for this study was a development of Thurstone's (1927) Case V method of paired comparisons (see Ostberg, 1980; Sjoberg 1967). The principal reasoning behind selection of this method lay in its capacity to not only provide a rank ordering of items, but to "determine the stimulus values themselves" (Thurstone, 1959; p69). The method of paired comparisons represents a notable advance over direct ranking and other item sorting techniques, e.g. Q Sort (Block, 2008), or Repertory Grid (see Adams-Webber, 1970). While direct ranking approaches provide an indication of preference/salience, the scale of which they produce is ordinal, i.e. they show only the sequence in which items are ranked and not the relative distance between them on a continuum (Oppenheim, 2000). This is important to know, as it provides insight into the presence of clusters and close-couplings of items, relative to more distal/less salient items. Further strengths of Thurstone's Case V method relate to: its ability to compare stimuli that vary in more than one attribute; its low cognitive load; capacity to demonstrate reproducible results (with rater consistency); and, the extent of shared perspective (between respondent concordance) (Bock and Jones, 1968).

Thurstone's classic studies involved respondents rating principally physical entities, e.g. light intensity, sound intensity, ice-cream sweetness and similar (see Thurstone, 1927; 1959), as such judgements relate directly to sensory characteristics and capacity. More recent applications have witnessed the method being applied to a broader array of perceptual and attitudinal topics, e.g. perceptions of risk (Ostberg, 1980); trust in Government Agencies (Pidgeon *et al.* 2003); and, ratings of emergency care patient safety priorities (O'Hara *et al.* 2012).

The method involves presenting respondents with pairs of items for all permutations of pairings within a given set. The respondent is simply asked to indicate which of each pair, is preferred, referenced to a defined choice criterion. Respondents apply "dis-criminal process" (Thurstone, 1927, p274) in each case by indicating their preference. The group of items display component characteristics, hypothesised to vary along a continuum representing the defined variable; in the current instance QoWL. While rooted in traditional psychophysics, the Case V method is distinct, in that the value or intensity of the items on the continuum are unknown and are subjective in nature. The method of paired comparisons seeks to make the immeasurable measurable (Thurstone, 1927) by assigning each item a value or level of salience along the continuum within which the group of items exists. This is achieved through the calculation of a mean magnitude for each, with the assumption that there is a standard error for each of the stimuli. Because the resulting scale is based upon the subjective "dis-criminal process" the resulting scale is not a probability scale, but can be translated into one through the inclusion of

an anchor item included with the purpose of providing "a common and unbiased reference" (Ostberg, 1980, pp. 191; also see Bock and Jones, 1968).

The "dis-criminal process" applied by each respondent in determining the scale of preference for the items presented is based on their own notions of which item is more important, valuable or salient than each other item. The process is repeated until all permutations of comparisons of pairings has been made by each respondent. The frequency with which each item is judged stronger/more salient than each other item determines its position on the continuum, with relative salience indicated by the 'distance' from those either side of it. A central claim is that presenting pairs of items, rather than a list of all items (as in direct ranking) has the effect of removing judgement bias and subjective opinion about where each item might sit on the scale as a whole i.e. each item can be assigned a scale position and value (Bock and Jones, 1968). The presentation of pairs being the added advantage that each item operates as both test stimulus and standard for comparison, making paired comparison a constant-method technique, such that if "one [handwriting] specimen *seems* to be more excellent than a second specimen, then the two discriminal processes of the observer are different, at least on this occasion" (Thurstone, 1927 pp. 274).

The psychological scale that results from the paired comparison exercise is "at best an artificial component" according to Thurstone (1927) and to make any assumption as to the nature of the distribution would be to assume that the scale is pre-existing when, in fact, it is the process of paired comparisons that produces the scale (Thurstone, 1927). The degree of ambiguity presented by any item can be assessed using what Thurstone calls the "dis-criminal dispersion" of the scale. This is done through the calculation of the standard deviation of a particular item on the scale relative to the distribution of the dis-criminal dispersion on the component scale. An item with large dis-criminal dispersion can be interpreted as presenting a high level of ambiguity (Thurstone, 1927).

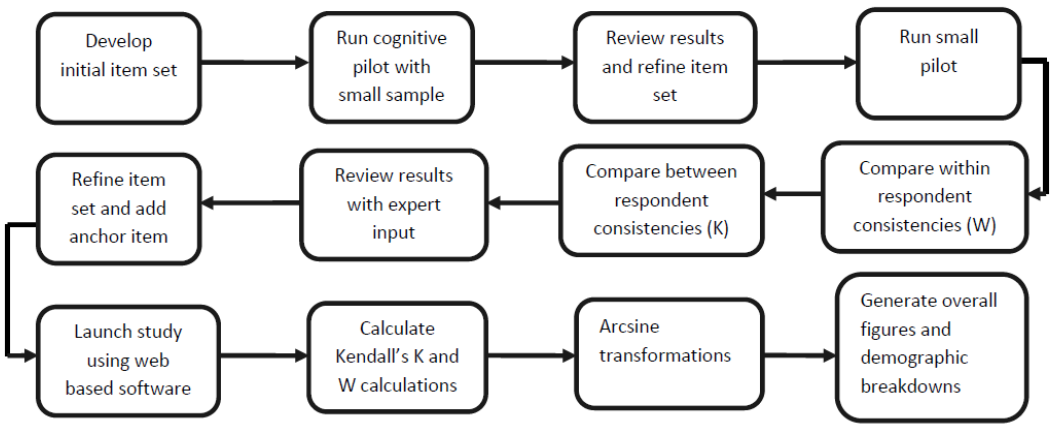
Difficulties and ambiguity can arise, for example, if respondents show indifference to the items presented, or are otherwise unable to distinguish between them. For the items to scale, there needs to be greater than 'just noticeable difference' between them. For example, from Thurston's classical experiments (Thurstone, 1927; 1959), if ice-cream sweetness is being tested and respondents are presented with three samples, all of which are the same flavour but they differ in sweetness, with A being only very slightly sweeter than B and B than C, then there may be no discernible difference to the taster. In such situations the just discernible difference is too slight to be identified and the scale becomes insensitive to detecting preferences, i.e. it does not work. In light of such an outcome, the design of the present study needed to be such that

there was sufficient discernible difference between items that any ambiguity due to lack of discernible difference between items could be avoided.

It is possible to test (Kendall's Coefficient *k*) for evidence of insufficient discernible difference, through testing for the presence of intransitive triads in response sets; i.e. Judgements of the type A>B>C, but C>A, thus indicating that problematic items should be removed from the response set. A *k* value greater than 0.7 is recommended (Cromer *et al.* 1984) as the criterion for acceptability of a response set because it reflects consistent judgements. The Case V method also permits testing of the degree of agreement (concordance) between respondents over the ascribed rankings (Kendall's *W*, coefficient of concordance). Again, the value for acceptance is set at >0.70 (Ferguson, 1981).

Because the scale resulting from the paired comparison exercise is subjective, the values calculated must be transformed into probability estimates. This is achieved through inclusion of the anchor item, against which, all other items can be referenced for each response group (see Ostberg, 1980; Sjoberg, 1967). This advancement on Thurstone's (1927) method allows for intergroup comparisons to be made. A critical element relates to the inclusion of an anchor item that is similar in nature to the core item set but distinct enough that it is not routinely encountered in common conceptions of the phenomena of interest. Its primary role is to create a point of reference, against which, the items of interest can be positioned so that it "could be judged without bias and independently of the assessor's degree of involvement" (Ostberg, 1980, pp. 191). Figure 6.1 depicts the stages involved in conducting the paired comparison study.

Figure 6.1. *Summary of Stages Involved in Conducting the Paired Comparison Study*



6.2.2.1 Defining the Item Set

Insights from studies one and two of the current research indicated a notable degree of consensus over core QoWL components. Study 1 (see Chapter 3) highlighted: *Recognition; Trust, Fairness and Equity; Job Demands; Social Cohesion; Communication; Intrinsic Job Satisfaction; Perceived Organisational Support.* Findings from Study 2, which afforded a degree of triangulation of findings from Study 1, resulted in identification of the components: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction; Work-Life Balance.* These findings, combined with insights from the literature, formed the basis for the selection of items considered to represent a set of core components of QoWL. The claim here is not that the resultant item set represents *the* set of primary components, but a set of empirically derived and widely cited components.

The six factors identified in Study 2a exhibited notable overlap with and apparent confirmation of findings from Study 1 (See Chapter 4: Study 2a – section 5.6: Discussion). *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment* are considered to be reflected in the themes labelled *Recognition* and T*rust, Fairness and Equity* in Study 1 and reflect alignment with the previously identified construct *'recognition for a job well done'* (Wayne *et al.* 2002; with linkages to enhanced employee engagement (see Harter *et al.* 2002; Salanova *et al.* 2005); promoting a sense of fairness (Hakenen *et al.* 2006; Llorens *et al.* 2006); and reducing intention to quit (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2002).

Leader-Member Exchange was considered to align with the theme identified as *Communication* in Study 1 and is discussed widely in the literature in relation to a number of organisational outcomes including: career progression (Graen and Scandura, 1987; Wakabayashi and Graen, 1984); intention to quit (Graen *et al.* 1982; Vecchio, 1982; 1985); organisational commitment (Nystrom, 1990); job satisfaction (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Green *et al.*1996); job performance (Dansereau *et al.* 1982; Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999; Liden *et al.* 1993).

Training, Development and Career Progression was felt to embody aspects of the theme *Recognition* from Study 1 and has been presented in the literature as having the potential to reduce labour turnover and increase job performance (e.g. Gerstner and Day, 1997; Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999). However, quality of training provided has, unsurprisingly, been highlighted as a moderator (Choo and Bowley, 2007). Career progression aspirations if unfulfilled, have been widely cited as being detrimental to job satisfaction (see, for example, Rice *et al.* 1989).

Flexibility relates to the degree of autonomy and choice employees have regarding how they organise their work and their working day. Elements of this were reflected in the Study 1 sub-theme *Flexibility and Choice*, which reflects respondent discussions relating to the degree of choice and control they have over working location, hours and how they organise their working day. The Job-Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979) suggests that any potential negative effects of perceived excessive work demands can be alleviated by the employee having a sense of control over their workload and how it is managed. *Flexibility* is further referenced in the literature in relation to the impact of flexibility on employee engagement (Cathcart *et al.* 2004); the impact of flexibility of hours and location (Hill *et al.* 2001); the impact of flexibility on family life (Bumpus *et al.* 1999: Crouter *et al.* 1999; Galinsky *et al.* 2010); the impact of flexibility (or autonomy) in organising workload (De Cuyper and DeWitte, 2004; Finn, 2001).

Job Satisfaction in the current context, relates to intrinsic aspects of job satisfaction and mirrors the theme ascribed the same title in Study 1. Intrinsic job satisfaction has been extensively explored in relation to a number of aspects of QoWL, including intention to quit (Agho *et al.* 1993; Carston and Specter, 1987; Lambert *et al.* 2001), job performance (Birnbaum and Somers, 1993; Brown *et al.* 1993; Iaffaldano and Galinsky, 1985), task variety and autonomy (Curry *et al.* 1986; Melamed *et al.* 1995).

Work-Life Balance is reflected in the Study 1 theme labelled *Job Demands* and has been researched in relation to impacts of work on home life (Hill *et al.* 2001; Shamir and Salomon, 1985), e.g. marital difficulty (Crouter *et al.* 1989; Matthews *et al.* 2006), work/home spill over (Paden and Buehler, 1995; Repetti and Wood, 1997). Notable findings relate to the impact of computer technology on work-life balance (Baruch, 2000; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007) intention to quit (Dex and Scheibl, 2001; Evans, 2001) and reduced absenteeism (Comfort *et al.* 2003; Galinsky and Johnson, 1998).

These seven factors were supplemented with the addition of a further component – *Fair Pay and Benefits*. This variable was added on the basis that financial reward featured in the background literature (e.g. Baker *et al.* 1988; Jenkins and Gupta, 1982; Kohn, 1993b; *et al.* 1992), and although not strongly referenced in the current study, it was felt that it should be included on the basis of the past literature and for the sake of obtaining a more complete picture of salience of QoWL related components. Although not part of the factor structure in Study 2, *Colleague Support and Team Work* was included in the paired comparison study on the basis of the strength of comments relating to it in Study 1, particularly from respondents within the Fire Service, Paramedic Service and the Recruitment Consultancy. These two components also complemented the variables *'getting on well with colleagues'* and *'being treated well by the*

organisation that employs me (incl. pay/benefits), ranked third and fourth in the study by Young *et al.* (2011). The HSE research found strong linkages between flexible working arrangements and QoWL and this is supported by the literature (Bumpus *et al.* 1999; Crouter *et al.* 1999; Galinsky *et al.* 2010; Hill *et al.* 1998; Hill *et al.*2001; Lindberg, 1996). It also found employee engagement to have strong positive linkages with quality of relationships with colleagues and level of colleague support, as well as quality of relationship with managers. This study also found that the salience of social aspects of QoWL to employees were under-rated by managers , who ranked 'getting on well with colleagues' seventh out of the nine variables presented in relation to employees who ranked it second in terms of its impact on their QoWL. The high salience of social support, is corroborated by findings from a substantial number of studies within the psychosocial domain, in particular with respect to its impact on employee health, sickness absence and turnover (see, for example, Lunt *et al.* 2007; Webster *et al.* 2008).

6.2.2.2 Size of Item Set

A maximum of nine items (36 paired judgements) is generally considered optimal for a complete paired comparisons design, beyond this there is a risk of respondents becoming fatigued and, as a result, either failing to complete the study or becoming disenchanted and demotivated (see Wilson and Corlett, 1995). This is because each additional item has an exponential impact on the number of comparisons that need to be performed.

The use of an incomplete design was considered, as this would have permitted a larger item set (i.e. >9 items). However, this was felt to be problematic in the current instance in that it would have doubled the number of respondents required and, more fundamentally, would rest upon achieving high between respondent concordances. The latter represents a central assumption where the objective is to define a scale that essentially characterises shared judgement over some physical entity. For Thurstone (1927), the issue was simply one of altering the stimuli until the difference between them becomes perceptible. This differs from the current endeavour, in so far as the objective was to determine the relative importance of variables contributing to a notional entity (QoWL). Hence, what was unknowable at this stage (and precluded an incomplete design), was how much respondents shared a common perspective on the relative salience of variables contributing to QoWL and, more fundamentally, whether they would exhibit consistency in their own judgements.

6.2.2.3 Representation of QoWL Items

Due to the nature of the items considered for inclusion, pictorial representation, as employed by Ostberg (1980) in his study of risk representations in forestry workers was discounted. The items relating to QoWL considered for inclusion in the study did not lend themselves to pictorial representation. Rather, in common with Pidgeon *et al.'s* work on public trust, each entity was characterised as a simple textual representation (Pidgeon *et al.* 2003). This important consideration related to the need to minimise the complexity and maximise the transparency of the items so that respondents could quickly decipher between items and make a quick decision as to their preference in each pairing.

Once the items had been selected for inclusion, issues of semantics needed to be resolved. Items needed to be clear, succinct and unambiguous. Having reviewed the wording of items presented in Study 2 (the quantitative survey) and comparing these with how respondents expressed themselves in the qualitative Study 1, an initial set of items was developed (see Table 6.2 for the initial item set).

Table 6.2. *Initial Item Set*

Item	
1	Reward and Recognition
2	Manager-Employee Relationship
3	Staff Development and Training
4	Flexible Working Hours or Location
5	Job Satisfaction
6	Balance between Work and Home Life
7	Fair Pay and Benefits
8	Colleague Support and Team Work
9	Fair Treatment and Equality

6.2.2.4 Cognitive Pilot

In order to test respondent interpretations of items and the task, a small sample of respondents (N=8) participated in a cognitive pilot. The sample was drawn from a range of demographic groups to ensure that a mixture of different educational, occupational, experiential, age and genders were represented. Respondents were split into two groups of four. One group was presented with each of the eight variables in turn and asked to describe their understanding of each. As a cross check to this, the remaining respondents were presented with eight descriptions

of the items and asked to give the researcher a short title to define what they thought the description was portraying (see Appendix T – QoWL Construct Definitions). Once all eight respondents completed their assigned task, the researcher compared the definitions and interpretations and reviewed the item set in light of the responses. Hence, minor amendments to the wording of items were made as a result of this exercise.

6.2.2.5 Selection of the Discriminant Criterion

Given that the principal aim of the study was to determine the degree of homogeneity/heterogeneity amongst employees regarding the relative salience of QoWL components, it was considered inappropriate to phrase the discriminant criterion in relation to the respondents' current job. The rationale was that if asked to rank the variables on the basis of their current job, this would be prone to profiling their current experience of work, rather than their more fundamental preferences. The reference criterion was, therefore, configured as *"In your ideal job, which of the two items below do you feel has greater impact on your Quality of Working Life?"* Although it was recognised that phrasing the discriminant criterion with reference to *ideal*, rather than *actual* risked effects associated with affective forecasting (Mellers and McGraw, 2001), this was considered necessary to pursue the issue of exploring the degree of a shared perspective on QoWL.

6.2.2.6 Quantitative Pilot

The refined item set was quantitatively piloted with a further sample of respondents (N=8), again representing a range of occupations. The pilot was conducted face-to-face, on a one-to-one basis with the researcher presenting the item pairs printed in Arial, size 16 font on strips of paper. Respondents were instructed that they were to respond quickly and instinctively without lengthy deliberation. Item pairings were presented in random order so as to remove any systematic effects.

Following the pilot, respondents were asked if they had felt unsure about the meaning of any of the response items. All respondents stated that they felt confident that they understood the meaning of items and that the items were discernibly different.

As a further check of the item set's suitability for paired comparisons, 'within respondent' internal consistency was assessed (Kendall's *K*) in each case. This revealed acceptable internal 'within respondent' consistency in each case (K = >0.70), which indicated that respondents

could make meaningful and reliable distinctions between the items (Table 6.3). However, on closer examination it was noted that the internal consistency coefficients increased when item 1 '*Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment*' was removed from the item set. In view of this, it was decided that this item should not be included in the final item set (Table 6.4).

Table 6.3. *Internal Consistency Calculations*

Respondent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
All Items	0.77	0.67	0.9	0.7	0.87	0.6	1	0.97
Item 1 removed	0.9	0.85	0.95	0.75	1	0.8	1	0.95

In order to assess the homogeneity of rankings, 'between participant' concordance calculations (Kendall's *W*) were also performed. This revealed a modest degree of concordance across the group (W=0.46) and, a significant *Chi²* value (χ^2=29 with df=7), i.e. indicative of a modest degree of shared perspective over the relative salience of QoWL components.

6.2.2.7 Selection of the Anchor Item

The criteria that needed to be met for the anchor item (see Ostberg, 1980) was for an item with an intuitive linkage to QoWL, but related to a frame of reference outside the world of work. The anchor item *Satisfaction with Life Outside of Work* was derived from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) 'Initial Investigation into Subjective Well-Being from the Opinions Survey' (ONS, 2011).

6.2.2.8 The Final Item Set

The final item set consisted of eight QoWL related items; establishing a set of nine with the addition of an anchor item. A set of nine items was of good fit with recommendations on Case V method (see section 6.2.2) and was considered to adequately capture the key QoWL components, as identified in studies one and two and, the comparable Health and Safety Executive study (Young et al, 2011). The final item set is presented in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. *Final Item Set*

Item	
1*	Satisfaction with Life Outside of Work
2	Relationship with your Manager
3	Staff Development and Training
4	Flexible Working Arrangements
5	Job Satisfaction
6	Balance between Work and Home Life
7	Pay and Benefits
8	Colleague Support and Team Work
9	Fair Treatment and Equality

*Item 1 is the anchor item relating to Quality of Life (QoL)

6.2.3 Procedure

The paired comparisons task was designed for on-line self-completion, using a bespoke software package designed specifically for that purpose. The software randomised the presentation of item pairings to remove the possibility of order effects. Participants were given instruction on how to complete the task at the beginning of the software programme, prior to commencing the task. A multi-faced approach to recruiting participants was adopted, through contacts in organisations, and the use of on-line links posted on *Facebook*, *LinkedIn* and a research related blog. The link was active for eight weeks from 1st October to the 26th November 2012. During that period weekly reminders were emailed to organisations and posted on the relevant internet sites.

6.3 Results

6.3.1 Calculation of (within respondent) Internal Consistency (K)

In the first instance, it was necessary to establish whether respondents were able to rank the components in a consistent manner. A low level of within respondent (internal) consistency might be taken to indicate either that the respondent had not fully understood the nature of the task, or that the items were not meaningful to respondents in the sense that they could not be discriminated between. Following established precedents, the approach adopted was to assess the proportion of response sets that exhibited inconsistency. Bock and Jones (1968) suggest that in instances where >10% of response sets exhibit poor internal consistency (K = <0.70), that this would indicate a problem with the assigned item set, e.g. items were ambiguous or ill-defined or

do not map onto a single continuum. Such an outcome would preclude any further analysis, or removal of one or more items.

Following the Case V method, respondent internal consistency was assessed by calculating the number of intransigent triads present in each response set. *K* values range from zero to one, with 0 indicating absolutely no consistency/completely random and 1 indicating perfect consistency. *K* values close to 1 are desirable as they indicate that respondents are able to adequately distinguish comparison items and, as a result, make consistent judgements about which are more or less important/salient/valuable in any given context. The *K* value can be checked using a *chi²* calculation, as was done in this instance (see Appendix U for formulae applied; and Bock and Jones, 1968).

Within respondent consistency *K* does not have a test for statistical significance, but Kendall (1955; cited in Bock and Jones, 1968) recommends application of the *Chi²* test under the assumption that the triads resulting from the respondent choices are made randomly. The *Chi²* test determines whether the observed triads are significantly different from the expected triads. A low *Chi²* value would indicate that there is a significant difference and, in this instance, would suggest that the choices made by the respondent are not consistent. Therefore, the application of the *Chi²* test enables an approximate probability to be calculated.

Alternatively, Cromer *et al.* (1984) suggest deriving significance from treating the *K* coefficient as a correlation coefficient with the level of significance set at 0.7. In the interest of statistical rigour it was considered appropriate to apply both methods to the data set. On reviewing the data in light of both of these tests, the criterion for inclusion of each individual response set in the full data set was reset to 0.6, as respondent data sets at this level were significant according to the *Chi²* test.

Application of these criteria resulted in 17 (7.3%) of individual response sets being excluded from further analysis, this resulted in a sample of 215 response sets being considered suitable for further analysis (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5. *Number of Reliable Response Sets by Level in the Organisation*

Level in Organisation	Total number of data sets	No of excluded data sets	Total remaining
Senior Manager/Director	14	1	13
Middle Manager	38	2	36
Supervisor/Team Leader	30	2	28
Semi-skilled/Unskilled	40	2	38
Unclassified	110	10	100
Total	232	17	215

6.3.2 Calculation of Between Respondent Concordance (W)

Following the removal of inconsistent response sets, the analysis proceeded with assessing the degree of between-respondent agreement (concordance) over the relative position of scale items. Again reflecting established precedents, (Cromer *et al.* 1984; Kendall, 1955; cited in Bock and Jones, 1968; Ostberg, 1980), was assessed using Kendall's coefficient (*W*). *W* indicates the degree of agreement between respondents over the order in which they ranked the set of items. A *W* value close to zero indicates little or no agreement, while a score of 1 indicates complete agreement.

The number of response sets was significantly in excess of the minimum criterion of 10 data recommended by Hunns and Daniels (1982) to obtain statistically valid results. However, it was noted that this author adds the caveat that the degree of concordance is prone to reduce as a product of sample size, i.e. the degree of concordance is likely to diminish as additional response sets introduce greater scope for a variety of responses.

In calculating concordance, each item (for each respondent) must be assigned a rank position of one to nine on the basis of the number of times each was 'preferred' within each response set. A rank of 1 was assigned to the 'most important' (largest impact on QoWL) item, with each subsequent rank being assigned to the next 'most important' item. A consideration before calculating *W* was the treatment of tied ranks, i.e. some items are preferred the same number of times and as a result fall into the same rank position. In these instances a tied ranks calculation *T* was applied (see Ferguson, 1981, and Appendix U for formulae).

Before proceeding with calculating *W* it is necessary to calculate the sum of squares of rank sums *S*.

Application of the coefficient of concordance to all response sets (N = 215) resulted in a *W* coefficient of 0.15, indicating modest agreement between respondents at the level of rank order. As a further check, as with its application to the *K* value, *Chi²* was used to test for significance (see, Ferguson, 1981).

This produced a non-significant result at the 0.05 level. Therefore, it was concluded that there was little agreement between respondents in the order in which they ranked the items, i.e. the test of significance confirmed a low level of between respondent agreement.

6.3.3 Calculation of Sub-Population Concordance

In view of the evidence of low global concordance between respondents, it was decided to explore whether this was a general finding, or whether higher agreement was present between members of a range of definable sub-samples. The demographic data gathered permitted the identification of sub-samples for age, gender, job role and public-private sector (see Table 6.6).

This revealed that between respondent concordance (*W*), while remaining modest in all cases, reflected some variability, with the highest consistency in organisations of 50-250 staff and amongst Senior Managers. As before, Chi² tests were applied as a cross check. The picture that emerged was mixed. In demographic groupings with a large number of respondents the *W* value was low, indicating little within group concordance, although the Chi² value was significant (>0.05).

It seems possible that issues of statistical power may be of relevance here. It has been suggested that in instances where the number of respondents in a group is high (>10 response sets), the *W* value can create noise in the data resulting in a low concordance (*W*) value where, in actuality, concordance might otherwise be considered fairly strong. Furthermore, a large number of respondents can also inflate the *Chi²* score, which may account for the significant *Chi²* values (Cromer *et al.* 1984).

Table 6.6. *Concordance and Chi² Calculations*

Demographic/Job Grouping	Concordance (*W*)	*Chi²*	No. of response sets in grouping
All response sets			
All response sets	0.15024	258.4128	215
Gender			
Female	0.155318	60.884656	49
Male	0.169889	76.110272	56
Size of Organisation			
<50 staff	0.23998	21.11824 – 0.001	11
50-250 staff	0.386256	21.630336 – 0.001	7
>250 staff	0.154563	114.994872	93
Sector			
Public sector	0.182464	128.454654	88
Private sector	0.157627	66.833848	53
Hours			
Full-time	0.153076	226.55248	185
Part-time	0.231622	50.030352	27
Length of service			
<1 year	0.210795	20.23632 – 0.001	12
1-5 years	0.21025	65.598	39
>5 years	0.183863	85.312432	58
Age			
20-29	0.154529	9.889856 – 0.30	8
30-39	0.199093	73.266224	46
40-49	0.207019	49.68456	30
50-65	0.214211	35.987448	21
Level in organisation			
Semi-skilled/Unskilled	0.21943	64.95128	37
Supervisor/Team Leader	0.188727	39.255216	26
Middle Manager	0.175191	46.250424	33
Senior Manager/Director	0.374137	29.93096	10

Corroborative evidence is perhaps apparent in the examination of demographic differences. These analyses, involving smaller samples revealed higher *W* values in some demographic groupings (e.g. part-time staff, length of service < 1year, length of service 1-5 years, age 40-49, age 50-65, semi-skilled/unskilled staff and senior manager/director level). The Chi^2 tests also revealed significant associations. What is less certain is whether the higher *W* values reflect shared experience/world view effects or are a product of smaller sample size, as Cromer *et al*. (1984), suggest.

6.3.4 Item scaling

While the degree of overall and within group concordance was found to be modest, a core finding was that respondents could make reliable and reproducible judgements of the QoWL components. Thus, it was considered that there was merit in exploring the distribution of components of QoWL, in particular to establish whether and in what ways items might cluster together, for the full sample.

This was addressed though producing a scale based on the aggregation of all respondent ratings (N=215), supplemented by the development of scales for a range of sub-samples, based on the demographics of age; sector (public vs. private); Socio-Economic Status (semi-skilled/unskilled – supervisor – senior management); and gender. The purpose of comparing the different sub-samples was to establish the degree to which variability might be considered to be present between different sub-populations with respect to the degree of relative importance each ascribed to QoWL.

Figure 6.2 presents mean ranking of items for the whole sample (N=215), relative to the anchor item (Item 1). Overall, item 5 (*Job Satisfaction*) was ranked highest, closely followed by item 6 (*Balance between Work and Home Life*). Item 3 (*Staff Development and Training*) was ranked lowest overall.

Figure 6.3 depicts the ranking of QoWL items on the psychophysical scale, based on the whole sample (N=215). The scale was derived by calculating the (all respondent) mean for each of the summed judgements. The anchor point (item 1 – *Satisfaction with Life Outside of Work*) is used as a means of calibrating the data (Cromer *et al.* 1984). To achieve this, the anchor item was set to zero and all other values (relative distance) calculated in relation to this to establish their salience.

Figure 6.2. *Overall Rating of QoWL Items*

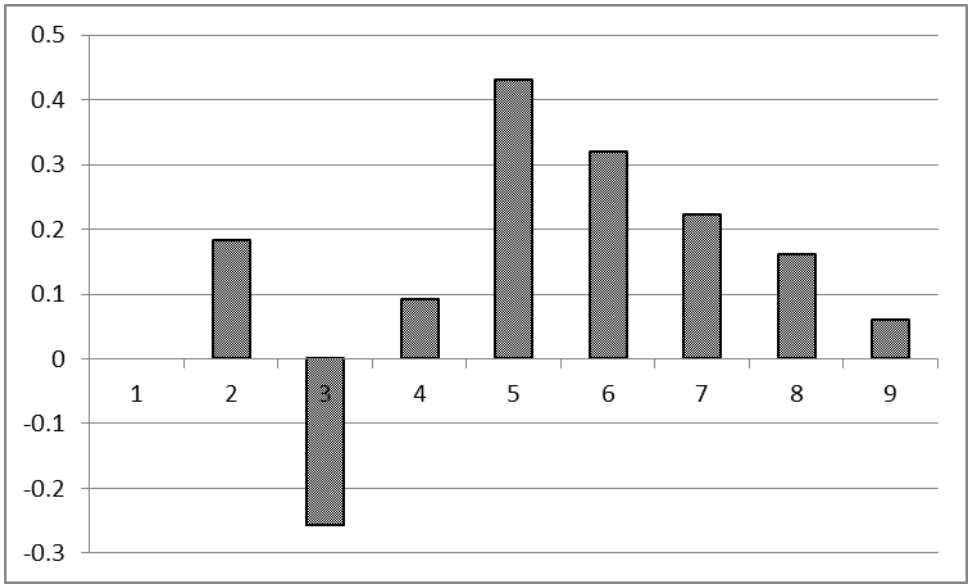
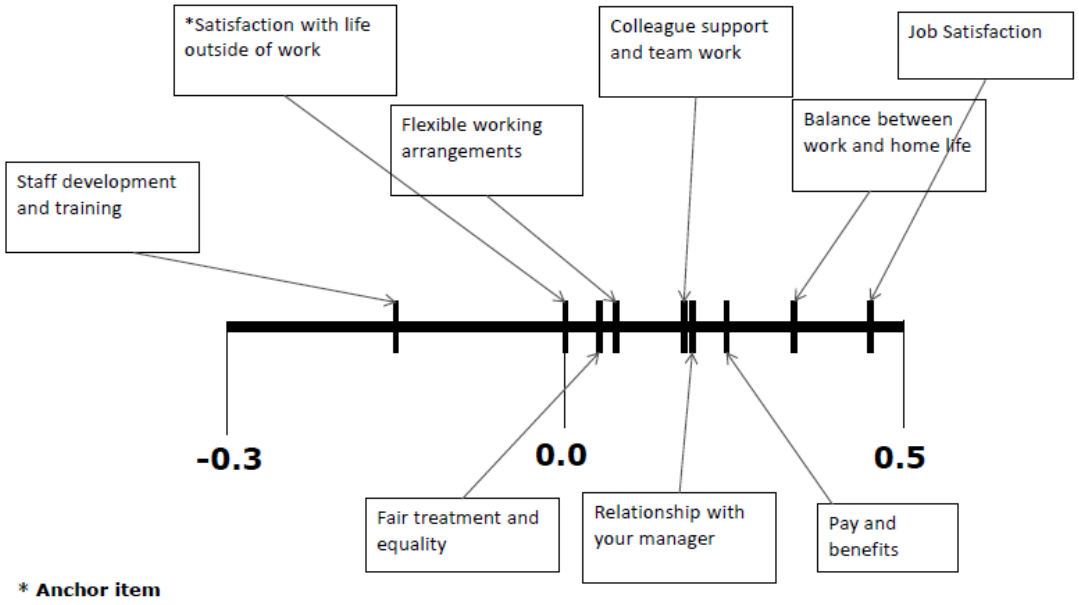


Table 6.7. A *scale of Salience of QoWL Components - Key*

Key	
1*	Satisfaction with Life Outside of Work
2	Relationship with your Manager
3	Staff Development and Training
4	Flexible Working Arrangements
5	Job Satisfaction
6	Balance between Work and Home Life
7	Pay and Benefits
8	Colleague Support and Team Work
9	Fair Treatment and Equality

Figure 6.3. *Representation of Psychometric Scale Indicating Relative Salience of QoWL Constructs (All Response Sets)*



6.4 Exploration of demographic differences

The ratings from each respondent were presented in data tables and the judgement proportions calculated. Reflecting recommendations advanced by Ostberg (1980), referenced to proofs produced by Sjoberg (1968), ratings were then transformed into arcsine deviates. Finally, the proportions were set against the anchor item. This process was then repeated for demographic breakdowns by age, sector, socioeconomic status and gender.

6.4.1 Age

Figure 6.4 depicts the relative value placed on QoWL by age group. There was a linear increase in the relative salience of QoWL with age; respondents aged 20-29 years indicated the lowest salience, which increased quite dramatically and then plateaued from Age 40 onwards.

Figure 6.4. *Salience of QoWL Constructs by Age*

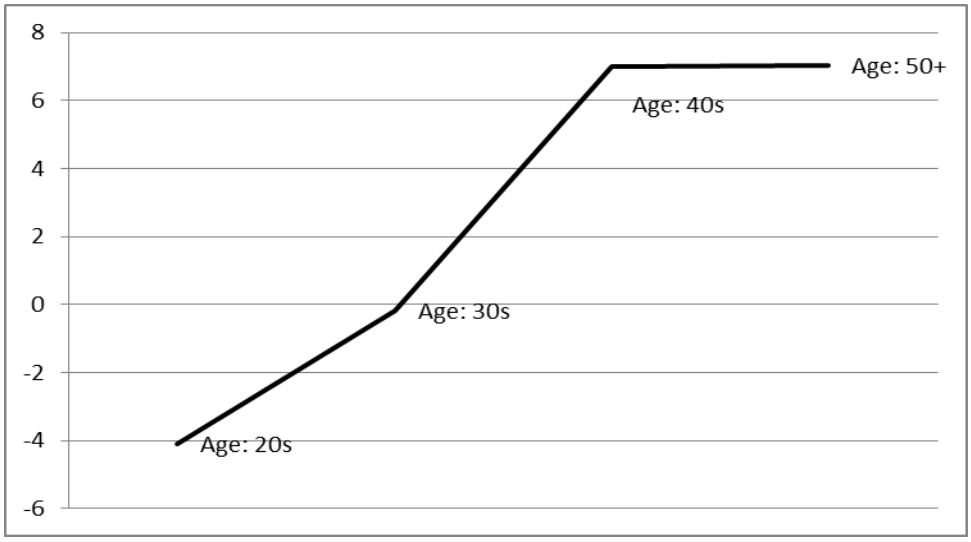
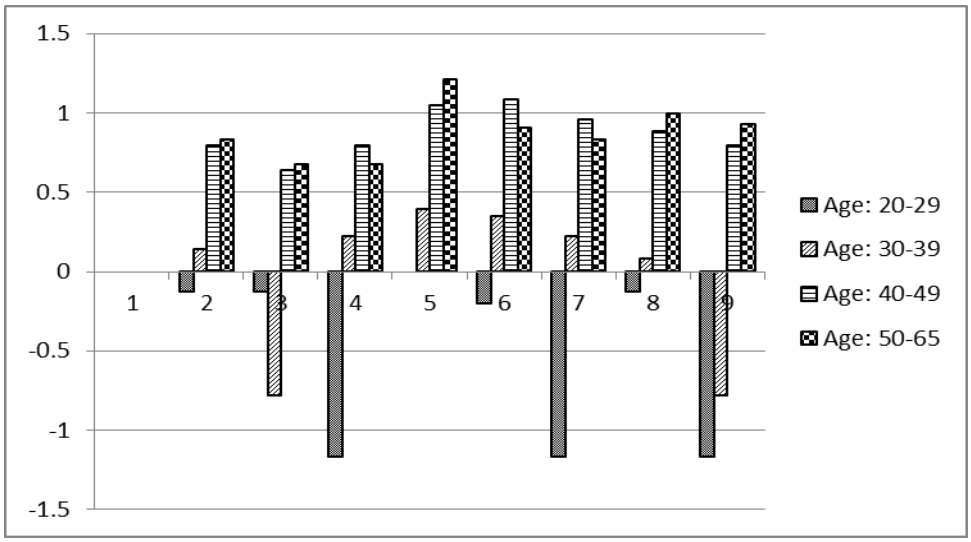


Figure 6.5 depicts the relative value placed on QoWL by age group, where it can be observed that in each of the QoWL components salience increases with age.

Figure 6.5. *Ranking of QoWL Constructs by Age*



See Table 6.7 for Key

6.4.2 Sector

Comparable analysis of the value placed on QoWL by employment sector (public vs. private) (Figures 6.6 and 6.7) again revealed a difference; public sector employees placed higher value on QoWL than private sector employees.

Figure 6.6. *Salience of QoWL Constructs by Sector*

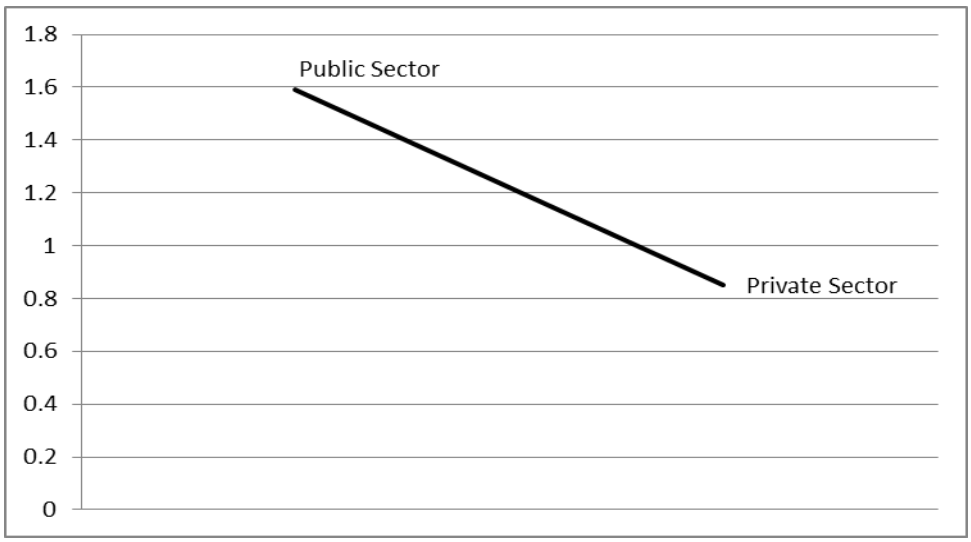
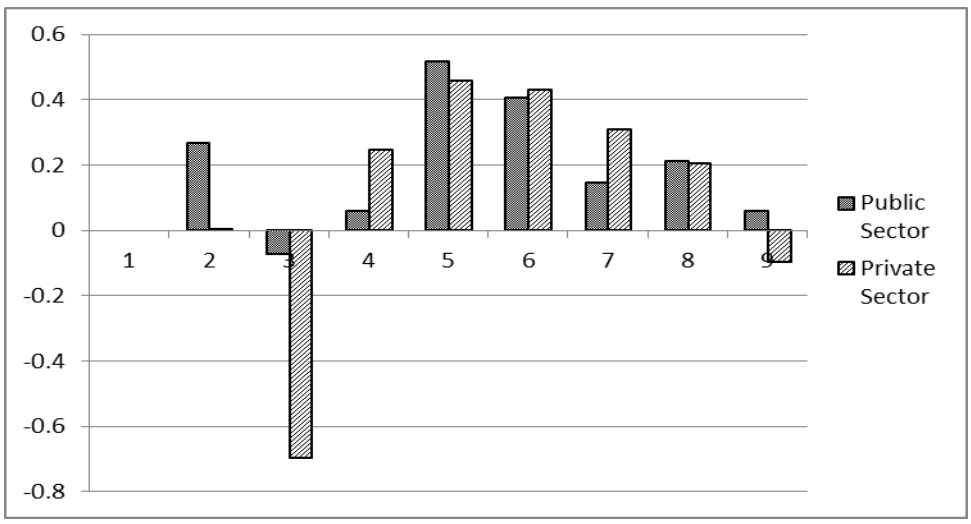


Figure 6.7 shows QoWL rankings by Sector, whereby public and private sector respondents assigned a similar profile of relative salience for the components, with the notable exception of item 3 (*Staff Development and Training*), which was ranked considerably different in salience by the public and private sector respondents.

Figure 6.7. *Ranking of QoWL Items by Sector*



See Table 6.7 for Key

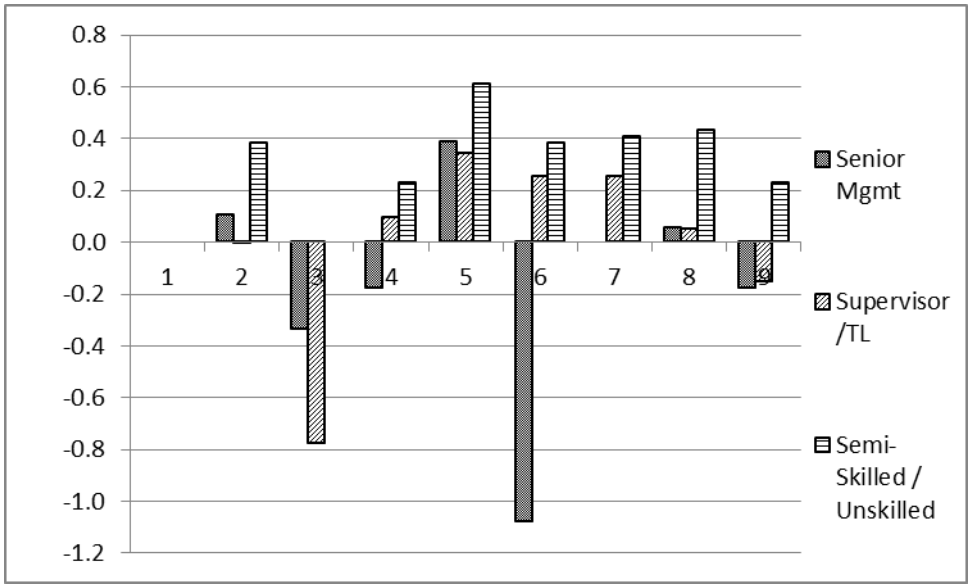
6.4.3 Socio-Economic Status

A third demographic comparison was made by Socio-Economic Status. This again presented as a linear relationship: the salience of QoWL being highest for lower status semi-skilled/unskilled staff and where senior managers ascribed it the lowest salience. A notable feature was the relative closeness of senior manager and supervisory profiles compared to the relative 'jump' in salience for semi-skilled/unskilled staff (Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.9 shows salience of QoWL components by Socio-Economic Status, whereby considerable differences in salience were evident in the cases of item 3 (*Staff Development and Training*) and item 6 (*Balance between Work and Home Life*).

Figure 6.8. *Salience of QoWL Constructs by Socio-Economic Status*

Figure 6.9. *Ranking of QoWL Constructs by Socio-Economic Status*



See Table 6.7 for Key

6.4.4 Gender

The final demographic explored was gender. Female respondents ranked QoWL variables as slightly less salient overall than male respondents, but the degree of difference appeared to be modest (Figure 6.10). Female respondents ranked *Job Satisfaction* and *Staff Development and Training* as slightly more salient than male respondents, and all other variables as slightly less salient than their male counterparts (Figure 6.11).

Figure 6.10. *Salience of QoWL Constructs by Gender*

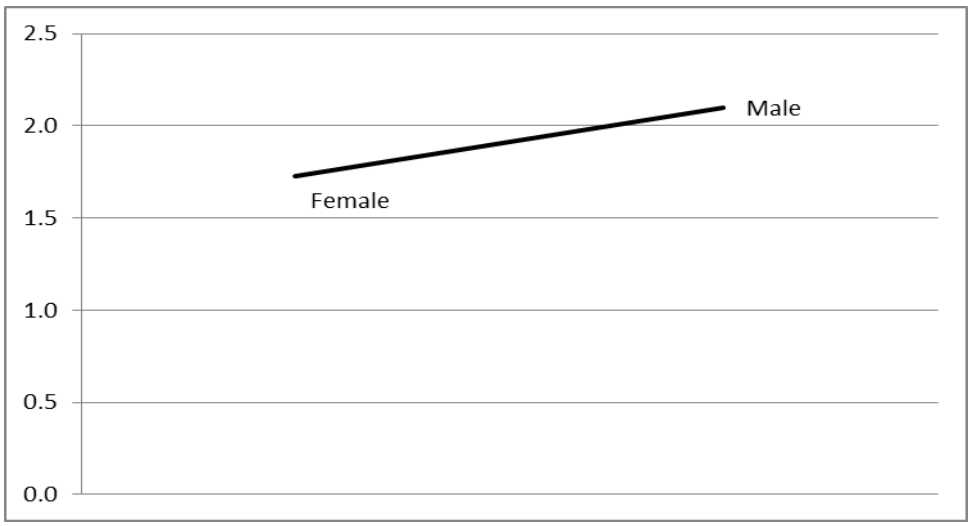
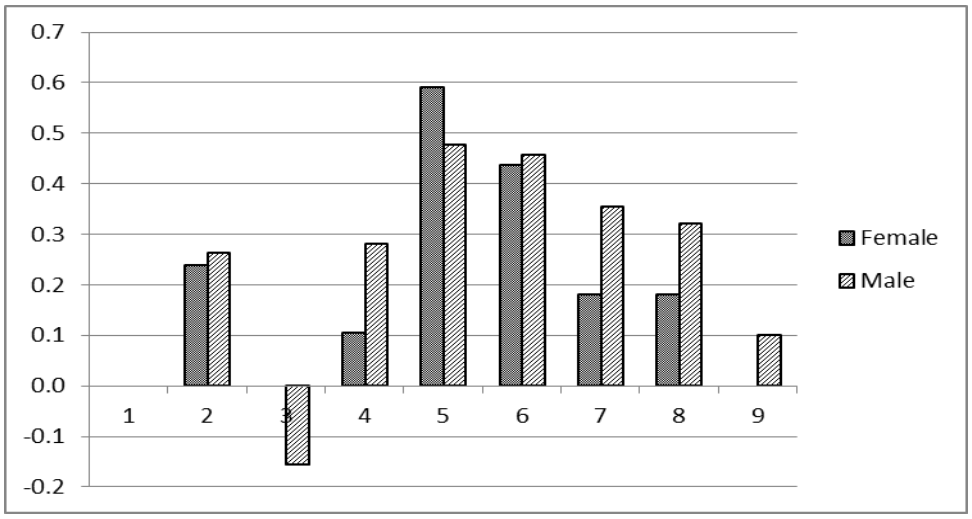


Figure 6.11 depicts relative salience of QoWL components by gender, where it can be observed that there was little difference in salience between male and female respondents across the components.

Figure 6.11. *Ranking of QoWL Constructs by Gender*



See Table 6.7 for Key

6.5 Discussion

The study revealed that the set of QoWL components were meaningful to individuals, and that individuals make meaningful and consistent distinctions between them. However, a central finding was that the relative priority ascribed to each one was prone to vary between individuals. However, there was some evidence that shared characteristics and/or shared experiences may be associated with higher alignment in the relative salience profiles. Beyond this there may be grounds to conclude that different social groups place different overall value on QoWL, i.e. QoWL was more important to some groups of employees than others.

While low levels of between respondent concordance at first sight appeared to indicate that individuals have different priorities, in terms of what they value most in terms of QoWL, examination of how the items clustered indicated notable consensus at a more global level, with *Job Satisfaction* being ranked most salient when the data set was examined as a whole and also when split by the different demographics in all instances.

Turning to issues of the relative importance placed on QoWL and how this appears to vary demographically, headline findings were that the value placed on QoWL showed a linear relationship with age, i.e. older employees placed a relatively higher value on QoWL than younger employees, this appeared to plateau beyond middle age (Figure 6.4). There was also a linear relationship in terms of Socio-Economic Status, whereby the lowest status employees placed the highest value on QoWL (Figure 6.8). Similarly, public sector employees placed a higher value on QoWL than private sector workers (Figure 6.6). However, no difference was apparent by gender, although the overall value placed on QoWL was lower for women than men, with the exception of *Job Satisfaction.*

One strength of the approach adopted was that it permitted a systematic assessment of the degree of consensus between respondents over the relative salience of components of QoWL. As such, this may be deemed an advance over previous studies, which derived salience from simple aggregations (mean rankings; Young *et al.* 2011), as well as a notable advance over questionnaire and qualitative studies that either were restricted to identifying salient variables or detected correlations between them.

Based on simple aggregation of respondent rankings *'*[intrinsic] *Job Satisfaction'* was *the* most salient component, followed, respectively, by *Balance between Work and Home Life, Pay and Benefits,* closely followed by *Relationship with your Manager; Colleague Support and Team Work; Flexible Working Arrangements; Fair Treatment and Equity;* and *Satisfaction with Life*

Outside of Work (anchor variable). *Staff Development and Training* was ranked as the least salient of these QoWL related variables, as assessed by the previous two studies to be the most important to the majority of employees.

Limited previous research that sought to understand employee prioritisation of QoWL components meant that the only known direct comparison that could be made was with Young *et al.* (2011). Indeed, Young *et al.'s'* variable set was similar, although not directly equivalent to the variables used in the current study, being derived from the literature alone, rather than being the direct product of empirical work. It comprised; *Getting on well with clients/public; Being treated well by the organisation that employs me (incl. pay and benefits); Liking the actual work I do; Having the right balance between my personal life and my work life; Being treated well by senior managers in the organisation; Having a good physical environment in which they work; Getting on well with colleagues; Having a good relationship with the person who manages me;* and *Getting on well with the people I manage.* A number of these variables reflect close alignment with those used in the study reported here: *Having a good relationship with the person who manages me* was identified as a key variable, (characterised by the variable *Relationship with your Manager)*; *Having the right balance between their personal life and their home life* (*Balance between Work and Home Life)*; *Getting on well with their colleagues (Colleague Support and Team Work); Liking the work they do (Job Satisfaction); Being treated well by their organisation (*including *Pay and Benefits)* has elements of parity with the current study item *Pay and Benefits*.

Interestingly, both the current research and the Young *et al.* (2011) employee rankings of QoWL variables, reflected the primacy of intrinsic job satisfaction (Young *et al.*, termed this *Liking the work I do* and in the current study this was termed *Job Satisfaction*). Work-Life balance (termed *Balance between Work and Home Life* in the current study and *having the right balance between my personal life and my work life* in Young *et al.* 2011) was ranked second and third most salient respectively. However, *Getting on well with colleagues* was ranked second most important in the Young *et al.* (2011) study, whilst in the current study this variable was ranked fifth most salient. Third most salient in the current research was *Pay and Benefits*; along with the variable *Being treated well by the organisation that employs me (incl. Pay and Benefits)*; this was ranked fourth by Young *et al.* (2011).

Beyond the most direct comparator study, Young *et al.* (2011), issues of QoWL component salience can only really be explored on the basis of the frequency with which they have been identified in published findings. (Intrinsic) *Job Satisfaction, Balance between Work and Home Life* (or *Work-Life Balance*), *Flexibility, Relationship with your Manager* (or *Leader-Member*

Exchange) and *Pay and Benefits* (*Reward*) have all been widely identified. By contrast, *Colleague Support and Team Work, Staff Development and Training* and *Fair Treatment and Equality* are all less frequently cited. This observation could be interpreted as indicative of their relative salience. Alternatively, it might merely reflect the focus and interest of researchers.

Hypotheses for the study set out to establish whether the selected headline components of QoWL were meaningful to employees. This appears to be confirmed by the high level of internal consistency within the response sets. Similarly, the premise that certain components of QoWL are more salient to employees than others also appears to be confirmed. However, the prediction of high consensus between individuals over the relative salience of QoWL variables at the level of rank order was not supported. In the case of the latter, a possible caveat is that there may be some grounds for concluding that the low level of concordance could, in part, be a product of the relatively large sample. As Cromer *et al.* (1984) note, the coefficient of concordance has been found to diminish as a result of increases in sample size due to the introduction of a greater variety of responses.

6.5.1 Issues Surrounding Affective Forecasting

In the context of the study, respondents were asked to imagine their ideal job and respond to the paired comparison exercise with this in mind. The approach was adopted in an effort to avoid eliciting state-dependent effects, referenced to their current job. The reason for doing this was the objective of determining respondents' QoWL aspirations, rather than their experience of QoWL in their current place of work, referenced to the core aim of establishing insight into the degree of shared perspective on QoWL.

However on reflection, and in light of the results, it is considered that asking respondents to divorce their QoWL aspirations from their day-to-day experience was problematic, in so far as there are grounds for concluding that aspirations are likely to be referenced to experience and (particularly) that negative recent experience may be likely to increase the salience/cognitive availability of those QoWL components that are challenged or significantly eroded (see Cervone, 1989). Additionally, the study asked respondents to engage in imagining how they might feel in a de-contextualised (and possibly unfamiliar) situation, as such the task essentially amounted to affective forecasting. As Wilson and Gilbert (2005) note "people routinely mis-predict how much pleasure or displeasure future events will bring" (p131). As Tversky and Kahnman, (1974) note people are prone to *availability bias,* whereas easily brought to mind elements assume high salience. Relatedly, these authors cite *imaginability* bias whereby outcomes that are more easily imagined can increase salience. On balance, it seems likely that

respondents would have struggled to divorce their aspirational QoWL preferences from their everyday experiences in expressing their preferences. However, the fact that respondents almost universally ascribed a high rank to *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life* lends strength to conclusions regarding the primacy of these variables.

6.6 Exploration of Demographic Differences

An exploration of the rankings by a range of demographics revealed moderate increases in the degree of within group concordance. While it is possible that this could be a product of smaller sample sizes (see Hunns, 1982), it is considered that this may also be indicative of effects relating to shared expectations and experiences of work. Evidence in support of the latter interpretation is apparent within published findings. These linkages are discussed in the following sections, referenced to each QoWL component.

6.6.1 Relationship with your Manager

6.6.1.1 Age

Notable variation was evident across the age cohorts in relation to the component *Relationship with your Manager*, with the greatest difference being found between the 40-49years and 50-65years cohorts. Those in the 20-29years cohort ranked this component 2nd most salient and on a par with *Staff Development and Training* and *Colleague Support and Team Work*, although the salience of this item was low in comparison with the salience assigned to it by the other age cohorts. Age related differences in relation to an employee's relationship with their manager have been evident in past research (e.g. Altimus and Tersine, 1973; Bradford and Raines, 1992; Gibson and Klein, 1970; Strauss and Howe, 1991; Tulgan, 2000; see previous chapter for full discussion of past research). However, no age cohort differences were detected in Study 2 (see Chapters 4 and 5) for the broadly synonymous component identified as *Leader-Member Exchange*. *Leader-Member Exchange* theory suggests that an employee develops a "unique social exchange relationship" (Janssen and Van Yperen, 2004; p.368) with their manager, which may influence employee performance and job satisfaction. In the current study, *Relationship with your Manager* embodies this concept but has been phrased such that respondents can easily comprehend the meaning of this component. The differences in relative salience indicated in this study might be interpreted as refuting findings from generation theory perspectives, which suggest that the older ''Silent Generation'' are less trusting of management than the more 'Global Centric' younger generation (Strauss and Howe, 1991), highlighting a stronger value

placed on employee engagement amongst younger employees (Society for Human Resource Management 2009), who want 'leaders' rather than 'managers' (Strauss and Howe, 1991). However, the higher salience of *Relationship with your Manager* assigned by the older age cohorts could also be interpreted as reflecting alignment with Generational Theory claims, if the salience of a QoWL related component increases when it is deficient, in line with a model of attrition. Ultimately, it should be kept in mind that while the current study provides an indication of the relative salience of QoWL components, it is less revealing with regard to the underpinning rationale of respondents.

6.6.1.2 Sector

Private sector employees ranked *Relationship with your Manager* lower in salience than their public sector counterparts. According to Baron (1995) the skills required by managers have increased over time and according to McCall *et al.* (1988; cited in van Wart, 2003) the most important and often lacking skill is that of effective communication and engagement between manager/leader and employee. It has been suggested that as a result of a lack of pressure and accountability from external sources regarding standards such as customer service, managers in the public sector have to use greater level of control over their employees (Rainey *et al.* 1995), which may have a negative impact on employee-manager relations.

Research on public private sector differences over employee – manager relationships is scarce, although Karl and Sutton (1998) report no significant differences between groups with regards their employee interpretations of 'supervision'.

6.6.1.3 Socio-Economic Status

The front-line employee cohort ranked *Relationship with your Manager* most salient, while the supervisory cohort ranked the component least salient, with the Senior Management cohort ranking this component between the two. As discussed in the previous chapter, little research in relation to Socio-Economic Status and the relationship an employee has with their manager exists, although it has been proposed that what managers perceive to be important to their employees and what employees report as being important to their QoWL does vary considerably in some areas (e.g. Kovach, 1987; 1995; GfK NOP, 2009).

Green *et al.* (1996) suggest that the greater the demographic difference between leader and subordinate, the lower the quality of communication between the two. This suggested disparity might then manifest itself to the greatest degree between blue collar workers and their white

collar manager in respect of the very different job roles they occupy. In the current study, the semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked *Relationship with your Manager* most salient, which may indicate that this is an aspect of their QoWL they feel is most lacking and therefore of greater salience as a result of its absence. If this is the case, it would suggest a model of attrition whereby the absence or perceived lack of a component relating to QoWL might increase its relative salience to the cohort in question. However, research by Duchon *et al.* (1986) indicates that even when in-group/out-group scores would suggest that employees are treated differently by their leader, this is not necessarily perceived by the employee.

6.6.1.4 Gender

Both Male and Female cohorts ranked *Relationship with your Manager* at a similar level of salience – more so than *Staff Development and Training* and *Fair Treatment and Equality*, but less so than *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life*. Female respondents ranked this item more salient than *Flexible Working Arrangements*, *Pay and Benefits* and *Colleague Support and Team Work*, while male respondents ranked it less so. As commented in the previous chapter (see Chapter 5), it has been suggested that mixed gender leader-member communication can be lower quality (Green *et al.* 1996) and that gender can also have an influence on who achieves leadership positions with a leaning towards more masculine characteristics preferred in many organisations (Ayman and Korabik, 2010). No significant differences in relation to *Leader-Member Exchange* were apparent in the previous study and in this current study the relative salience of *Relationship with your Manager* is similar for both the male and female cohorts. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the difference in satisfaction with leadership is greater for women in the public and private sectors, with female employees in the public sector expressing greater dissatisfaction with their leaders (Schneider and Vaught, 1993).

6.6.2 Staff Development and Training

6.6.2.1 Age

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is conflicting evidence with regards age related differences and *Staff Development and Training*, with some studies reporting significant differences by age (e.g. Aldag and Brief, 1977; Cook and Wall, 1979; Hackman and Oldham, 1976), while others found no such differences (e.g. Katz, 1978; Warr *et al.* 1979). In the current study, the relative salience of this component was ranked least salient by the age 30-39 years

cohort, followed by the age 20-29 years cohort, with the age cohorts 40-49 years and 50-65 years ranking it most salient of all the age groups, indicating a considerable increase in the salience of this component with age. Interestingly, those aged 30-39 years ranked this component the lowest of the four age groups indicating a decline in the salience of this component in this age cohort. Whether this indicates a trend related to age and life stage or a generational difference is not possible to decipher with the data set discussed here, but would be an interesting question for further exploration.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Generational Theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991) might indicate that the younger age cohorts place higher salience on *Staff Development and Training* with their high educational standards and 'global-centric' attitude; however, this does not appear to be reflected in the findings of this study. Generational Theory does however, characterise 'Generation Xers' as 'slackers' who prioritise work-life balance and this might offer an explanation for the findings of the current research (Society for Human Resource Management 2009; Pitt-Catsouphes *et al.* 2009).

While the picture with regards the differing salience of *Staff Development and Training* is unclear, what is known is that participation in training declines with age (Weyman *et al.* 2013), which might offer a clue as to why the relative salience of *Staff Development and Training* increases with age – lack of opportunity to engage in training increases the salience of this component. If this is the case, it would provide further support for a model of attrition in relation to aspects of QoWL, whereby the perceived absence of a component has a greater negative impact on QoWL than the presence of a component has a positive impact.

6.6.2.2 Sector

Both the public and private sector cohorts ranked the salience of *Staff Development and Training* below that of the anchor item, although in the case of the private sector cohort, it was ranked considerably below it, whereas the public sector cohort ranked it marginally below the anchor item.

Research relating to performance management and objective setting suggests that the public sector is subject to more complex performance measures as a result of scrutiny from the general public as to whether or not government funded agencies are meeting their objectives (Rainey *et al.* 1976) and that as a result, objectives can be less tangible in the public sector (Drake, 1972) and conflicting (Siffin, 1963; cited in Rainey *et al.* 1976). Furthermore, Schultze (1970; cited in Rainey *et al.* 1976) suggests that public sector performance measures drive a risk averse culture.

If public sector performance measures are inadequate and objectives conflicting, identifying appropriate training could be difficult and this might relate to the higher salience of this item for public sector employees as compared with their private sector counterparts. However, given that much of this research is now dated, it would be interesting to explore if this is still the case.

Rainey and Bozeman (2000) suggest that frustrations can arise as a result of a lack of autonomy and promotion opportunities and their findings do mirror those of Karl and Sutton (1998) in relation to what motivates public and private sector managers in terms of making a contribution through work (in the case of public sector managers), as well as via pay and reward (in relation to private sector managers). Research further suggests that public sector managers are less satisfied with promotion opportunities (Rainey *et al.* 1976). In a comparison of rankings of work 'wants', Jurkiewicz *et al.* (1998) found interesting differences between public sector employees and their private sector counterparts in relation to *Staff Development and Training*, with public sector employees ranking "chance to learn new things" 2nd out of 15 items and private sector employees ranking it 9th. Related to this is "variety in work assignments", which showed a similar disparity in its ranking between sectors, with public sector employees ranking it 6th out of 15 and private sector employees ranking it 12th. These findings would appear to reflect the difference in salience of *Staff Development and Training* indicated in the current research. However, overall "opportunity for advancement" was placed in the top 5 items for both sectors (Jurkiewicz *et al.* 1998).

6.6.2.3 Socio-Economic Status

The semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked *Staff Development and Training* on a par with the anchor item, while the Supervisor and Senior Management cohorts both ranked this component below the anchor item with regard to its salience, with the supervisory cohort assigning the lowest salience of the three groups to this component. The previous study (Study 2b) found no significant difference by Socio-Economic Status for this component in relation to *Staff Development and Training*, although this current study clearly indicated differences in the salience attributed to this component. The 2012 *Skills and Employment Survey* (Green *et al.* 2012) found that training is unequally distributed, with those from a background of higher education receiving twice as much training, of longer duration, than those with lower educational attainment. Furthermore, the report found that those with lower educational attainment reported that the training they received required them to learn the skills by heart, while those with higher educational backgrounds reported that the training they received

provided them with skills to find new and improved ways of working and gave them greater enjoyment of their jobs.

Perhaps this component can be interpreted in respect of a model of attrition, whereby the lowest ranking employees perceive a lack of available training and this accounts for their perception of it being of higher salience than those in supervisory and management positions. The senior management cohort attributed the lowest salience of the three cohorts to this component and this might be representative of a situation whereby they have greater access to *Staff Development and Training* and/or perceive that they have reached a level where it is less important to pursue further career development.

6.6.2.4 Gender

The Female cohort ranked the component *Staff Development and Training* on a par with the anchor item, while the Male cohort ranked this component below the anchor item. Little research exploring gender differences with regard to *Staff Development and Training* exist (as discussed in Chapter 5), although it has been suggested that while women benefit from mentoring (Phillips, 1977, cited Hunt and Michael, 1983), they find it difficult to identify a suitable mentor (Hunt and Michael, 1983). According to Noe (1988) it can be challenging for women to understand male-dominated organisational culture without the guidance of a mentor and this can have an impact on their progression.

While women do express the desire for greater training opportunities (Lawrence, 1994), they tend to occupy positions that require high levels of expertise developed outside the workplace (i.e. University qualifications), but remain under represented in positions of authority within organisations (Savage, 1992). Recent research by Green *et al.* (2012) found overall rates of training to have fallen between 2006 – 2012, with this figure being most affected by a decline in long training courses (defined by the authors as training undertaken over more than ten days) and, an increase in internet and correspondence training courses. Furthermore, the greatest decline in participation in these long training courses was amongst female employees. However, the authors also found a rise in the desire to participate in training, most prevalent amongst male employees and, those who had not had the opportunity to participate in desired training the previous year. This might indicate a model of attrition in the current research whereby a lack of training, where desirable, leads to an increase in the perceived salience of this component.

6.6.3 Flexible Working Arrangements

6.6.3.1 Age

As with the previous components, considerable variation was apparent between age cohorts in the relative salience of the component *Flexibility.* The age 20-29 years cohort ranked this component considerably lower in salience than the other age cohorts, with the age cohorts 40-49 years and 50-65 years ranking it of similar salience. Salience of this component was highest in the 40-49 year old cohort, with those aged 50-65 years rating it slightly less salient. Past research suggests that older employees do value *Flexible Working Conditions* to a higher degree than their younger counterparts (e.g. Smeaton *et al.* 2009; Watson *et al.* 2003; Weyman *et al.* 2012) and this has been attributed to greater demands in terms of caring for relatives and attending to their own health conditions. The previous study did find significant differences in the attitudes of the under 25 year olds and their older counterparts in relation to *Flexibility* and, this would appear to be supported by the results of this current study.

A recent audit of the research relating to extending working life and its possible impact on National Health Service (NHS) employees, as commissioned by the NHS Working Longer Review Group and conducted by Weyman *et al.* (2013) highlights the need for an employer led targeted approach to meeting the needs of employees at different life stages. While the review relates specifically to the NHS, it does raise interesting questions around employer flexibility and its impact on enabling staff to work later in life. The current trend appears to be that many staff leave the NHS in their fifties and seek employment elsewhere. Factors contributing to this exodus appear to relate to "health status, financial status, family commitments, peer retirement norms, job characteristics…and structural influences" (p4). The authors suggest that in order for staff to remain in employment longer there needs to be a "good fit between the demands of their job, their working environment, their personal circumstances and their capability" (p4). Flexibility of working hours is one area that can be influenced by the employer and may enable staff to stay in employment longer and, according to Weyman *et al.* (2012), many would prefer shorter working hours as they progress towards retirement.

6.6.3.2 Sector

The private sector cohort assigned this component slightly higher salience than the public sector. Gregory and Milner (2009) suggest that greater flexibility is often found in public sector organisations and large private sector organisations, while smaller organisations might struggle to offer sufficient staff cover to allow greater flexibility. Similar findings are reflected by

Felstead *et al.* (2002), who also found that non-managerial employees in the public sector are more likely to be afforded the opportunity to work at home. Interestingly, according to Felstead *et al.* (2002), the picture becomes more complex when considering the degree of unionisation of an organisation. Private sector organisations that are highly unionised tended to offer greater opportunities to work at home, while the reverse was evident in highly unionised public sector organisations.

Other research however, suggests that the public sector generally offers greater flexibility (e.g. Gregory, 2009; Russell, 2009) and, that there is a significant difference relating to flexible working and reduction in work pressure and work-life conflict only in the public sector (Gregory, 2009; Russell, 2009). If a model of attrition is driving the current findings, it would indicate that private sector employees do perhaps have less opportunity to work flexibly given their higher salience ratings of this component.

6.6.3.3 Socio-Economic Status

The semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked *Flexible Working Arrangements* most salient of the three cohorts, with senior management ranking this component least salient and the supervisory cohort ranking it between the two in terms of salience. The previous study (Study 2b) did show a significant variation between ratings of semi-skilled/unskilled employees compared with those of supervisor and senior management level employees, and the difference is greatest in terms of relative salience between the semi-skilled/unskilled and supervisory/management roles in this current study. Research suggests that autonomy can reduce cortisol levels in employees (Kunz-Ebrecht *et al.* 2004), and *Flexible Working Arrangements* could potentially offer employees a sense of autonomy. In light of this perhaps the lower autonomy that often accompanies semi-skilled/unskilled jobs (e.g. less flexibility of work location, hours, job role) is a possible explanation for the increased salience of this component in the semi-skilled/unskilled cohort. This lack of autonomy might also be reflected in this cohort as they age and become less physically able to meet the day-to-day demands of their job. For example, in roles that do not offer the same opportunities to work reduced hours, due to shift patterns, or roles that require physical strength. Such circumstances might mean reduced opportunity to work flexibly, resulting in the increased salience of this component.

6.6.3.4 Gender

One of the largest differences in salience of QoWL variables between male and female employees in the current study related to the variable *Flexible Working Arrangements*. That female respondents rated this less salient than their male counterparts is an interesting finding that is seemingly at odds with the past literature, which suggests that women's increasing presence in the workforce has been the catalyst for greater organisational focus on flexibility (e.g. Rousseau, 1995; Schwartz, 1989; and discussion in Chapter 5). Increasing child care and elderly relative care demands have also been implicated as factors that have driven the flexible working agenda forward (Lee, 1991). Benefits and costs of flexible working systems have been discussed, with benefits including increased job satisfaction, autonomy and reduced absenteeism and, costs ascribed as financial, difficulty supervising employees, but these/such benefits are generally considered to outweigh the costs (Golembiewski and Proehl, 1978). Perhaps the availability of more flexible working systems has resulted in women ascribing it less salience as a result of its availability. Although it must also be noted that there are a higher proportion of female employees in the public sector than in the private, with 65.2% female to 34.8% male employees employed by the public sector according to 2006 figures (Millard and Machin, 2007), as compared with 41.1% female and 58.9% male employees in the private sector (Millard and Machin, 2007).

6.6.4 Job Satisfaction

6.6.4.1 Age

Job Satisfaction was ranked least salient across the different age cohorts, namely by the 20-29 year old cohort in the current study, while the 50-65 year old cohort assigned this component the greatest salience of the four groups, just above that of the 40-49 year old cohort. Past research has indicated a positive relationship between age and *Job Satisfaction* (e.g. Stagner, 1975; Staines and Quinn, 1979; Weaver, 1980), however, no such variation in ratings of *Job Satisfaction* was indicated in the previous study. In relation to general job satisfaction, White (1985; cited White and Specter, 1987) found a positive linear relationship between age and job satisfaction in 18 out of 25 studies examined. However, their research suggests that age is not the primary factor in this relationship and that factors relating to locus of control, length of service, salary and level in the organisation are the key variables in the relationship (White and Specter, 1987).

Rhodes (1983) in her review of the literature found age related differences across various work attitudes and behaviours, most notably relevant to this study in relation to job satisfaction and cited a number of studies supporting this assertion (Aldag and Brief, 1975; Near, Rice and Hunt, 1978; Staines and Quinn, 1978; Weaver, 1978, 1980). As early as 1960, a study by Hoppock (1960) that involved 286 respondents found "a slight but clearly positive tendency for satisfaction to increase with age" (p117), the author went on to hypothesise that this was most likely a result of the "increasing pleasure and satisfaction which may come to the worker as a result of gradual proficiency and familiarity with his work" (p117). The current study does not indicate the degree to which satisfaction increases or decreases with age, but does suggest that QoWL factors become increasingly salient with age.

6.6.4.2 Sector

Both the public and private sector cohorts ranked *Job Satisfaction* the most salient of the QoWL related items, with the public sector cohort assigning it marginally greater salience than the private sector cohort. In comparisons of satisfaction between public and private sector employees, Rainey and Bozeman (2000) cite the findings of the National Longitudinal Youth Survey reported by Steel and Warner (1990) and DeSantis and Durst (1996), which shows higher levels of general work satisfaction amongst public sector employees. This is reflected to a very small degree within the current research. Rainey and Bozeman (2000) suggest that those studies in which public sector satisfaction is lower than that of private sector employees are the result of surveys that explore specific facets of work satisfaction, rather than general work satisfaction.

However, public sector employees were found to have lower job satisfaction than private sector employees in other studies (e.g. Baldwin, 1991; Schneider and Vaught, 1993) and equally as satisfied in others still (e.g. Lewis, 1991; Steel and Warner, 1990). Public sector employees have been found to be less satisfied with certain areas of job satisfaction e.g. autonomy (Solomon, 1986), with lower job satisfaction in the public sector associated with communication relative to specific job responsibilities and procedural constraints (Wright and Davis, 2003). The mixed picture in relation to *Job Satisfaction* would seem to present opportunity for future research to seek to clarify the findings of the likes of Rainey and Bozeman (2000) by exploring which facets generally seem to be rated as contributing to higher and lower levels of *Job Satisfaction* in the public and private sectors.

6.6.4.3 Socio-Economic Status

All three cohorts ranked *Job Satisfaction* the most salient of all the components. In a study of supervisory and non-supervisory employees, Jurkiewicz and Massey (1997) found that both groups desired greater task variety, lower levels of supervision and greater opportunity to contribute positively to society. The non-supervisory group reported receiving more of the factors they placed less salience on and less of the factors they expressed greater desire to have. The authors suggest that this could have contributed to decreased morale and lower job satisfaction. Moon (2000) explored differences between senior and middle managers and found middle managers to have lower levels of perceived organisational commitment than seniors. However, the difference was lower between the levels in the public sector than in the private sector, leading Moon (2000) to propose that "…there might be a higher level of homogeneity in identification with and loyalty to their organisations between top and middle managers in the public sector" (p190).

Blauner (1960; cited in Watson, 2003) found a hierarchy of satisfaction across organisational levels, such that unskilled manual labourers reported the lowest levels of satisfaction followed by skilled manual workers and clerical workers, whereas professionals and businessmen reported the highest levels of satisfaction. This perhaps offers some sort of explanation for the results of the current study, which found that the salience of QoWL components was lower for lower job grades. Given Blauner's (1960) findings, the results obtained here could be interpreted as supporting a model of attrition, whereby those with the highest reported levels of satisfaction (managers) are in a position whereby their QoWL aspirations are largely met, and as a result QoWL is less salient to them. In contrast, the lower level semi-skilled/unskilled employees may have numerous unfulfilled QoWL related aspirations thus increasing the salience of QoWL in this group of respondents.

6.6.4.4 Gender

Both cohorts ranked *Job Satisfaction* most salient of the QoWL related items overall. However, female respondents ascribed higher salience to *Job Satisfaction* than male respondents. This phenomenon is explored by Clark (1997) and Walman (1994; cited in Clark, 1997), who suggest that expectation may account for this difference as women have lower expectations of work than men and men generally tend to over-estimate their potential performance more than women.

Clark (1997) proposes that this lower expectation in female employees is likely the cause of their higher reported job satisfaction in light of the fact that "by most objective standards, women's jobs are worse than men's" (p341) and they are subjected to worse conditions in relation to "hiring and firing, job content, promotion opportunities and sexual harassment" (p342). Levels of reported job satisfaction are generally lower for male employees and amongst those with higher levels of education or at middle age (Clark, 1997). However, the findings of the current study could also be interpreted as indicative that female respondents rank *Job Satisfaction* higher than male respondents because they experience lower levels of it and its absence heightens the level of salience placed upon it. The current study does not explain the 'why?' but only the 'how much' and as a result, this requires further scrutiny in order to provide clarification.

6.6.5 Balance between Work and Home Life

6.6.5.1 Age

The 20-29 year old cohort ranked *Balance between Work and Home Life* lowest of the four age cohorts, while those aged 40-49 years assigned this component the greatest salience, slightly above that of those aged 50-65 years. Research in relation to the *Balance between Work and Home Life* is contradictory with some (e.g. Woodward, 2000) suggesting that younger employees have a greater desire for balance having watched their parents struggle in difficult economic times, whilst others (e.g. Weyman *et al.* 2013) suggest that older workers desire greater *Balance between Work and Home Life* for the same reasons why they desire greater flexibility (see previous section *Flexible Working Arrangements*). The previous study (see Chapter 5 for full discussion of *Work-Life Balance* and differences between age cohorts) found significant variation in ratings of *Work-Life Balance* for those aged under 25 years and their older counterparts, whilst these attitude differences were also potentially reflected via the relative salience that different age groups assigned to this component.

Generational Theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991) suggests that different generations have different work ethics and aspirations, which might offer some explanation for the differences in the salience of QoWL factors across the age groups explored here. According to Strauss and Howe (1991), there are four generation types that repeat on a cyclical basis. The ''Silent Generation'', born between 1925 and 1942, are characterised by their prioritisation of work above home life and commitment to collaboration and team work with a general distrust of authority. The Baby Boom Generation (born between 1943 and 1960) are considered much more optimistic that the 'Silent Generation' and responsible for the "me" generation in pursuit

of personal gratification. Next, according to the authors, comes the X Generation, considered to be "slackers" characterised by higher levels of independence, lower prioritisation of work and responsible for the drive towards greater work/life balance; being more technologically savvy (Wieck *et al.* 2002), this generation is thought to be more resilient to change than previous generations. The final group is the Generation Y ers, thought to be more 'global-centric' having grown up with the internet and increased global terrorism (Jenkins, 2007). This generation are thought to have high appreciation of inclusion and diversity, high resilience to change and are the most educated. They are also thought to have the highest level of team and collaborative working orientations since the 'Silent Generation'.

If Generational Theory is applied to the current study findings, it might suggest a model of attrition whereby the perceived absence of *Balance between Work and Home Life* in the older age cohorts might increase their sense of the relative salience of this component. This might also be supported by the findings of Weyman *et al.* (2013), in their proposition that older workers are less inclined to ask for greater *Work-Life Balance* for fear it might be perceived as a lack of commitment to their job.

6.6.5.2 Sector

Both cohorts ranked *Balance between Work and Home Life* of similar salience, with the private sector cohort attributing slightly greater salience to the component than their public sector counterparts. Research relating to flexibility of work location indicates greater flexibility is generally offered by public sector organisations (e.g. Drew *et al.* 2003; Gregory, 2009; Russell, 2009). Furthermore, this increased flexibility has been found to reduce work-home life conflict (e.g. Gregory, 2009; Russell, 2009), therefore having a positive impact on *Balance between Work and Home Life.*

Research by Persaud (2001) suggests that the public sector does generally offer greater Work-Life Balance and that the *Balance between Work and Home Life* is of greater importance to public sector employees. This throws out interesting questions with regards the current research whereby private sector employees assigned slightly greater salience to *Balance between Work and Home Life* than public sector employees. If Persaud's (2001) findings are to be accepted, it would seem that this is indicative of a model of attrition whereby the lower degree of *Balance between Work and Home Life* experienced by private sector employees heightens the salience of this component.

6.6.5.3 Socio-Economic Status

Senior management cohort ranked *Balance between Work and Home Life* lowest in salience of all the QoWL items presented, considerably below the salience rankings of the semi-skilled/unskilled and supervisory cohorts. This result is interesting in the context of past research, which suggests that those in higher status roles experience greater negative spillover between work and home life (Schieman *et al.* 2006). The higher salience of this component for the semi-skilled/unskilled and supervisory level cohorts might be indicative of their reduced autonomy and choice over how to organise their working day in relation to achieving *Balance between Work and Home Life,* as suggested by the literature relating to autonomy and control as a mediating factor (e.g. Karasek, 1979).

Higher levels of sickness absence in blue collar and lower level white collar workers has been attributed by Vaananen *et al.* (2008) to difficulty in balancing work and home life, as well as psychological ill-health (e.g. Borg and Kristensen, 1999) and work-family conflict (e.g. Shamir and Salomon, 1985; Jahoda, 1979; Locke and Olson, 1981; 1976). The increased salience of *Balance between Work and Home Life* for these two cohorts could then be attributed to lack of autonomy to manage the degree to which work life impacts upon home life due to hours, location etc. which, if found to be the case, would lend further support to a model of attrition in relation to QoWL, whereby the lack or absence of a component heightens its salience.

6.6.5.4 Gender

Balance between Work and Home Life was ranked the second most salient component by both the Male and Female cohorts, with the Male cohort ranking it marginally more salient than the Female cohort. This finding is interesting in light of research which suggests that women continue to hold responsibility for most domestic duties even when both they and their partner are in full time employment.

Greenhaus *et al.* (1989) found a stronger relationship between work involvement and work-family conflict for women than men. This could be explained in relation to traditional role expectation, whereby women historically develop their self-concept on the basis of their family role performance and men on their work role performance (Pleck, 1977). Role Theory (Cooke and Rousseau, 1984) suggests that physical and psychological strain can result when role expectations overload an individual within either the work or home domain and further pressures develop when perceived expectations of role performance in one area limit an individuals' ability to adequately perform the other. According to LaCroix and Haynes (1987),

the degree of autonomy an individual has further influences the conflict, resulting in greater role conflict where there exists a lesser degree of autonomy. In light of this, it would be expected that women place greater salience on *Balance between Work and Home Life* than their male counterparts, but this is not however the case in the current research, with women rating both as having less salience in relation to their QoWL than men. However, it could be that were the respondents asked to rate the salience of these variables on their home life, the outcome may have been different.

6.6.6 Pay and Benefits

6.6.6.1 Age

Again, the 20-29 year old cohort ranked *Pay and Benefits* lowest of the four age cohorts, with those aged 40-49 years ranking it most salient of the cohorts. Published literature in relation to *Pay and Benefits* is mixed in this regard, with some suggesting that the value of benefits such as annual leave entitlement and pensions naturally increases over time (e.g. Tremblay *et al.* 2000) and with tenure, and as a result satisfaction also increases with age (e.g. Meyer and Allen, 1984). Subsequently according to some researchers (e.g. Mathieu and Zajac, 1990), satisfaction cannot be attributed to age alone as it cannot be isolated from increased *Pay and Benefits* as a consequence of greater tenure.

Williams *et al.* (2006) found only a weak correlation between age and satisfaction with pay, whilst it has been suggested that satisfaction with *Pay and Benefits* may be linked to employee perceptions of what they should receive, with the general expectation being that *Pay and Benefits* increase with age because older employees perceive that they should receive higher rewards than their younger counterparts. The increased salience of *Pay and Benefits* in the older age cohorts in the current study may be related to increasing focus on retirement planning with age.

6.6.6.2 Sector

Greater salience was attributed to the component *Pay and Benefits* by the private sector cohort (although the difference was quite small) and by far the greatest degree of past research is focussed in this area. Karl and Sutton (1998) suggest that there will naturally be variation between public and private sector workers, whereby, public sector workers place greater emphasis on job security, whilst private sector workers will likely rank job reward as most important. In their own research, the authors found that job values for public and private sector

workers were significantly different, with private sector workers valuing good wages as most important and public sector workers preferring their work to be interesting – this would appear to be reflected to some degree within the current research with regards to the private sector employees who ranked pay and benefits as more salient than public sector employees. Karl and Sutton (1998) found no significant difference in the importance assigned to job security between private and public sector workers. Accordingly, the findings from the current research appear to be consistent with those of Karl and Sutton (1998), in that public sector workers place greater salience on factors relating to QoWL than private sector workers. Karl and Sutton (1998) also found that public sector supervisors regarded flexibility of work schedule more important than other respondents.

The authors concluded that motivation of employees in the public and private sector is likely to be achieved through different means, with private sector employees likely responding to reward systems and public sector employees towards greater job enrichment. Blunt and Spring (1991) examined levels of job satisfaction in graduates working in administration roles in public, private and non-profit sectors. Private sector graduates reported higher levels of satisfaction with pay and promotion opportunities. Furthermore, research by Flowers and Hughes (1973) suggests that blue collar manufacturing workers stay in their jobs as a result of the benefits they receive, which would support the findings of Karl and Sutton (1998).

Buelens and Broeck (2007) reiterate the consistent finding that private sector employees tend to value reward more than public sector employees and cite Moon (2000) who found that pay was not a strong motivator for public sector managers and Cacioppe and Mock (1984) whose research suggested that public sector employees are more intrinsically motivated, a finding also reflected in research by Hopkins (1983, cited in Schneider and Vaught, 1993). The authors do acknowledge however, that there are inconsistencies and inconclusivity in the findings of a number of studies, like that of Balfour and Wechsler (1991), meaning that the overall picture is far from clear. Buelens and Broeck (2007) conclude that hierarchical level has a greater impact on motivation than work sector, with high level public sector employees tending to have the same motivators as their lower level management private sector counterparts. They also cite Baldwin (1991) who found that public and private sector managers have equal motivation. Indeed, several studies have suggested that public sector employees find reward in helping others through their work above pay (Kilpatrick *et al.* 1964, cited Wittmer, 1991; Newstrom *et al.* 1976; Rainey, 1982; Solomon, 1986).

6.6.6.3 Socio-Economic Status

The senior management cohort ranked *Pay and Benefits* least salient of the SES groups, while the semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked it most salient. In their study of motivational factors for supervisory and non-supervisory employees in the public sector, Jurkiewicz and Massey (1997) found agreement between organisational levels in terms of the desire to contribute to the work environment, to demonstrate leadership capabilities, to be included in decision making and, in using their specific skills in their job. Both groups expressed a desire for higher pay and for increased job security. However, research by Kovach (1987; 1995) revealed stark differences in employee and manager perceptions of what was deemed more important to employees, with managers suggesting that pay was a top priority for the workforce – a sentiment not mirrored by the workforce, which would seem at odds with the current findings.

6.6.6.4 Gender

The Male cohort ranked *Pay and Benefits* considerably more salient than the Female cohort. Past research is conflicting with regard to male and female satisfaction with pay, with some reporting no difference in the value of pay between them (e.g. Bokemeier and Lacy, 1986), while others suggest that men are less satisfied with their pay then women (Walman, 1994; cited in Clark, 1997). Furthermore, women have been found to have lower pay expectations (Davison and Burke, 2000), earn less than men in comparable jobs, but are no less satisfied (Miceli and Lane, 1991; Cited in Williams, 2006). The current research would seem to support this past research, with respect to the fact that men assigned higher salience to pay than women, thereby suggesting that it is of greater importance to them.

6.6.7 Colleague Support and Team Work

6.6.7.1 Age

Those aged 20-29 years ranked *Colleague Support and Team Work* least salient of the four age cohorts, within 40-49 year-old cohort this was ranked the highest, whereas those aged 50-65 years ranked it slightly below them. The 30-39 year-old cohort ranked this component slightly more salient than their 20-29 year old counterparts. Recent research by Weyman *et al.* (2013) suggests that older employees value social aspects of work more highly than their younger counterparts and this is one of the main drivers for their desire to remain in the workforce. The

findings of the current study, may therefore indicate this sentiment, given that the highest salience of this component was indicated by the 40-49 year-old and 50-65 year-old cohorts.

Research suggests that while multi-generational work-teams can benefit from the experience of older employees and technological and physical advantages brought by younger employees (Weyman *et al.* 2013), perceptions of different attitudes to work can cause rifts within teams (Wolff *et al.* 2010), whilst perceptions of discrimination by older employees might account for the increased salience of the importance of *Colleague Support and Team Work* in the older employee cohorts in the current study.

6.6.7.2 Sector

Both cohorts ranked *Colleague Support and Team Work* at a similar level of salience, and less so in both instances than *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life*. Past literature in relation to this aspect of QoWL is limited, but does appear to indicate that public sector employees are generally less satisfied with their co-workers than their private sector counterparts (see Rainey, 1979). It has been suggested that this is as a result of increased bureaucracy in the public sector, which has a negative impact on work-group cohesion (Odom *et al.* 1990). Furthermore, Karl and Sutton (1998) found no significant differences between employment sectors in relation to their satisfaction with co-workers, which seems to be supported in the current findings.

6.6.7.3 Socio-Economic Status

The semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked *Colleague Support and Team Work* most salient of the three SES cohorts and at a similar level of salience to their ranking of *Pay and Benefits*, while both the supervisory and senior management cohorts ranked this component one of the least salient of the QoWL related items. Little research relating to this aspect of QoWL exists, except in relation to workplace friendship, which has been said to "reduce workplace stress, increase communication, help employees and managers accomplish their tasks, and assist in the process of accepting organisational change" (Berman *et al.* 2002; p.217). Workplace friendship is defined as "non-exclusive workplace relations that involve mutual trust, commitment, reciprocal liking and shared interests or values" (Berman *et al.* 2002; p.218), which extends beyond the notion of *Colleague Support and Team Work* and, as such, falls somewhat outside the scope of this study. However, one aspect of workplace friendship relevant to *Colleague Support and Team Work* is the increased support and resource it offers in helping employees get their job

done (e.g. Palmer, 1998; Shalala, 1998). According to Berman *et al.* (2002), workplace support cannot be based solely upon self-interest and must involve some degree of shared interests, values and trust, such that, if opportunities for reciprocation arise in future, they will be acted upon. As such, it might be interpreted that *Colleague Support and Team Work* is not possible without some level of 'friendship' developing. Workplace friendship has further been associated to increased productivity (e.g. West and Berman, 1997), whilst a lack of close relationships at work has also been linked to increased anxiety in employees (Sievers, 1999).

However, what is lacking in the literature is discussion of the role of *Colleague Support and Team Work*, or even workplace friendship across SES. Could it be that managers afford less salience to *Colleague Support and Team Work* because they have more support from their comrades, or is it that they have less and perceive their role as more individualistic (and possibly more competitive) by nature? Or perhaps the increased salience of this aspect of QoWL for the front line is related to lower levels of autonomy at this level and greater (perceived) need for colleague support.

6.6.7.4 Gender

The Male cohort ranked *Colleague Support and Team Work* more salient than the Female cohort, putting this item mid-way in the Male cohort 'list' of QoWL related items. Published literature relating to networks in the workplace might offer some insight here. Studies suggest that women have less informal networks than men in the workplace (Cannings and Montmarquette, 1991), and as a result they are more reliant on formal processes e.g. for promotion opportunities, while men tend to use the informal relationships they have in securing faster and more frequent promotions (Markiewicz *et al.* 1999). Furthermore, Ibarra (1993) suggests that individuals in organisations seek out those with whom they 'network' on the basis of their relative potential contribution to the network. According to Ibarra (1993), this puts women at a disadvantage due to sex-role stereotyping relating to women's competencies, as well as the fact that women tend to be in the minority in the more powerful positions in organisations, and as such, they are less desirable connections. However, individuals tend to seek out those more similar to themselves with whom to form friendships (Markiewicz *et al.* 1999), and women tend to gain greater support from friendships with other women in the workplace (Ibarra, 1993).

Competition may also influence workplace friendships, according to Markiewicz *et al.* (1999), with lower status individuals perceived as being less desirable workplace 'friends'. This potentially has a greater negative effect on women in the workplace as they occupy fewer of the

highest level roles. Perhaps it is this imbalance in networking influence that is reflected in the lower salience female respondents assign to *Colleague Support and Team Work* relative to the other aspects of QoWL presented in the current study.

6.6.8 Fair Treatment and Equity

6.6.8.1 Age

Fair Treatment and Equity was ranked one of the lowest in salience for the 20-29 year-old cohort. Those aged 30-39 years also ranked this low in their QoWL related item 'list' and at a similar level of salience to the component *Staff Development and Training*, while respondents aged 40-49 years and 50-65 years ranked salience of this component the highest. Accordingly, this may be reflective of perceptions that pay and benefits should increase with age (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990), as well as perceptions of older employees that they are discriminated against when it comes to employment as a result of their age (Weyman, 2009; Metcalf and Meadows, 2010), thus heightening their sense of the salience of *Fair Treatment and Equity.* Wray *et al.* (2009) suggest that older employees feel that work-life balance opportunities are offered in preference to younger employees with families, representing inherent systematic unfairness, even though it has been suggested that "it is important to ensure that all generations feel they are being treated equally, even if at times they are being treated differently" (pp. 58; Weyman *et al.* 2013).

6.6.8.2 Sector

The public sector cohort ranked *Fair Treatment and Equality* marginally more salient than the private sector cohort. Public sector organisations tend to have more formal processes in place (Perry and Rainey, 1988), whereas the private sector tends to be driven more by the markets. Although fewer formal procedures might be associated with greater organisational effectiveness, these procedures appear to enhance perceptions of organisational justice (Leventhal, 1980). Kurland and Egan (1999) however, found that perceptions of procedural and distributive justice amongst public sector employees was lower than that of those in the private sector, a finding replicated by Cole and Flint (2003) and, one that has been linked to long term sickness absence amongst public sector employees (Elovainio *et al.* 2005).

Procedural justice has been found to predict trust in senior management in public sector employees (Albrecht and Travaglione, 2003), whilst organisational justice has been found to be higher in Finnish physicians working in the private sector, which has also been associated with

greater well-being and a more positive attitude (Heponiemi *et al.* 2011). Although perceptions of *Fair Treatment and Equity* would certainly seem to impact upon QoWL, the picture with regards to any possible differences between public and private sector employees seems far from clear.

6.6.8.3 Socio-Economic Status

The semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked the component *Fair Treatment and Equality* as most salient, with both the supervisory and senior management cohorts ranking it much lower in its relative salience; although no significant difference between the cohorts was apparent in the previous study. Procedural and distributive justice have been explored widely in the literature (see for example; Bettencourt and Brown, 1997; Masterson *et al. 2002*; Wayne *et al.* 2002), although the literature does tend to focus on justice/fair treatment in relation to that afforded to employees (e.g. Wayne *et al.* 2002), rather than as a comparison of perceptions of procedural and distributive justice in relation to Socio-Economic Status. Perhaps the administration of procedural and distributive justice by managers and supervisors *to* front line employees explains why it is that lower Socio-Economic Status employees rate *Fair Treatment and Equality* as more salient – because they are on the receiving end of it.

6.6.8.4 Gender

The Female cohort ranked *Fair Treatment and Equality* lower than their male counterparts. This finding is interesting in light of research that suggests that women are generally paid less than men in equitable roles (e.g. Kovach, 1987), suggesting a lack of *Fair Treatment and Equity* in this area of work. Jacobs and Steinberg (1990) suggest that "women's work remains significantly undervalued" (p.459), despite the fact that men and women place equal value on pay (Bokemeier and Lacy, 1986). Procedural and distributive justices have been associated with job satisfaction, intention to quit and evaluations by supervisors (Alexander and Ruderman, 1987). In relation to gender, women have been found to be more generous in rewarding co-workers and less generous in rewarding themselves than men (Major, 1987) and that women work longer hours and to a higher quality than men for the same pay (Major *et al.* 1984). Women have also been found to expect lower pay for jobs compared to their male counterparts (Desmarais and Curtis, 1997).

Furthermore, women have been found to place greater emphasis on how they did the job, rather than the outcome of the job when they consider their success (Farmer and Fyans, 1980), whilst

women are more inclined to encourage participation from all members in group scenarios (Rosener, 1990). It has been suggested that the reason for these differences is that women are more predisposed to forming relationships with co-workers than men (Rosener, 1990). Men also often have greater access to mentors and informal communication with other male colleagues that influence organisational decision-making (Powell and Mainiero, 1992). Women and men have been found to perceive procedural and distributive justice differently (Sweeney and McFarlin, 1997). In light of the past literature and the findings of the current study, it would appear important for managers to be aware of the differences in how procedural and distributive justice are perceived by male and female employees and to adjust the way they approach justice-related issues accordingly.

6.7 General Discussion

6.7.1 Age differences

Recent changes in the UK retirement age has brought with it an increased focus on the impact of an aging workforce on business performance and questions around an increasingly intergenerational workforce. Relative salience of QoWL components vary considerably by age, with the 20-29 year cohort rating all components below or equal to that of the anchor item *Satisfaction with Life Outside of Work.*

If Generation Theory is considered credible, the implications for businesses are far reaching in terms of a need to target differing drivers and aspirations through compensation packages offered and leadership styles. According to the American Management Association (AMA) the 'Silent Generation' are looking towards retirement; the Baby Boomers are starting to focus on post-retirement careers; Generation Xers are seeking challenging work that enables them to maintain good work/life balance and Generation Yers expect due compensation and acknowledgement of the loyalty and technological skill they bring to business. The AMA (2014) concludes that in order to retain valued employees across different generations, businesses must "approach compensation, benefits, and incentives to satisfy the needs of each generation's unique perspectives, attitudes, and values about work".

Isolating age as a variable across life stages is difficult to achieve and non-work related factors such as familial responsibilities and evolving work/life aspirations will undoubtedly influence individual perceptions and desires in relation to QoWL. It would seem logical to purport that as an individual ages their focus might become less centred on career progression and more focussed towards work/life balance. Given that the current study shows work/life balance as the

second highest ranking variable after job satisfaction, with training and development being ranked the least salient of the variables, this would seem a reasonable explanation in relation to the increasing salience of QoWL factors by age.

6.7.2 Sector

Ranking of QoWL items by sector revealed some notable differences between public and private sector respondents. While rankings of *Job Satisfaction, Balance between Work and Home Life* and *Colleague Support and Team Work* were similar between the sectors, relative salience of QoWL for variables *Relationship with your Manager, Staff Development and Training, Flexible Working Arrangements, Pay and Benefits* and *Fair Treatment and Equity* all showed larger differences between the groups. The greatest discrepancy between QoWL salience occurred for the variable *Staff Development and Training*, which private sector employees rated as considerably less salient than public sector employees. In relation to sector, there appears to be no research relating directly to QoWL, however research by Karl and Sutton (1998) examined the differences between what public and private sector workers tend to value the most and how it has varied over time. They suggest that pay was the primary factor at the turn of the century, but that this has been replaced by supervision at a consequence of the Hawthorne studies (1924-1932). Ten years after which saw research by Jurgensen (1947; cited in Karl and Sutton, 1998) suggesting that job security and career progression opportunities had become paramount, with a follow up study in 1975 placing the type of work in the top spot. Karl and Sutton suggest that these adjustments in priority over time relate to "economic, social, technical and political conditions" (p516).

Rainey and Bozeman (2000) examined twenty years' of past research relating to differences in public and private sector organisations in an effort to unpick where and if the differences exist in response to what they describe as the *"a priori"* (p448) assumptions, where "persons on the street and scholars in the academy will lecture at length on the character of public bureaucracies, blithely free of any concern over the need to show evidence for their assertions" (p448). They suggest that these *a priori* assumptions are in fact, contradictory to empirical evidence, yet they persist as a result of popular beliefs that private businesses are more efficient and effective than public sector organisations. They go on to cite Simon (1995) who purports that public, private and non-profit organisations are the same in the key characteristic of leader capacity to reward employees, but that establishing similarities and differences is also important for a number of reasons including circumstances whereby public organisations are privatised.

Young *et al.* (2012) found QoWL ratings in industry and finance/business sectors to be high; and, transport, communications and education ratings to be low. They suggest that "it seems likely that differences will reflect an interplay of job characteristics, cultural and structural variables" but conclude with the recommendation that further investigation is needed in order to understand the differences in ratings. Gaining a large enough sample that the current research responses could be explored by sector and Socio-Economic Status might be an interesting progression in light of the findings of Buelens and Broeck (2007) and of the unpublished Health and Safety Executive research (2012).

6.7.3 Socio-Economic Status

The demographic breakdown of employment level in the current study suggests that QoWL becomes increasingly salient for lower level employees. Unpublished HSE research (2012) asked managers to rank nine QoWL variables in accordance with what they believe to be most important to their employees. They asked employees to rank the same list from their own perspectives and drew some interesting results. Managers ranked "getting on well with clients/public" as being what they thought their employees would feel most salient in relation to QoWL, whereas employees ranked this seventh out of the nine variables. Employees ranked "getting on well with colleagues" as second most important to them, whereas managers ranked this as seventh in the list according to their perception of what employees found most salient. "Having the right balance between my personal life and my work life" was ranked similarly by both groups as was "Being treated well by the organisation that employs me (incl. pay/benefits)" and, "having a good relationship with the person who manages me". The discord between manager and employee perceptions of the social support aspects of QoWL could potentially leave managers open to missing important areas for improving employee experiences of QoWL. This was also highlighted as being an important variable in research by Choo and Bowley (2007), who suggest that positive team building activities help to enhance training outcomes that in turn influence performance and intention to quit.

Differences in salience of QoWL components between employees of differing socioeconomic status were most prevalent in relation to *Balance between Work and Home Life* in the current study, with the Senior Management cohort ranking this below the anchor item and supervisory and semi-skilled/unskilled cohorts ranking it above the anchor item. Research exploring socioeconomic differences in relation to aspects of QoWL is lacking and the picture incomplete as a result.

6.7.4 Gender

There is little difference in the relative salience of QoWL related variables by gender. Across all but two variables (*Job Satisfaction* and *Staff Development and Training*), male respondents attributed higher salience, but only marginally. In light of past literature (see Chapter 5 and discussion of individual components below), it might be expected that women would attribute greater salience to *Flexible Working Arrangements* and *Balance between Work and Home Life*, but this was not found to be the case in the current study.

A considerable proportion of the published research in relation to gender has focussed primarily on women (Lewis and Cooper, 1983; Voydonoff, 1987) and on those within managerial and professional roles (Bartol, 1980; Duxbury and Higgins, 1991: Scandura and Lankau, 1997), as well as focussed more on the work-family conflict aspect than QoWL *per se* (Duxbury and Higgins, 1991; Grover and Crooker, 1995; Scandura and Lankau, 1997). In light of this, further enquiry is warranted in relation to gender differences in salience of QoWL related variables in a wider variety of job roles and grades.

6.8 Reflection on Demographic Differences

In order to get a more distinct view of the interplay and relative impact of each of these demographics, the sample would need to be split further to enable a multivariate analysis. This was not possible with the current data set, as to fragment it further would have resulted in samples too small to draw any generalizable conclusions. Although the results do suggest that this might represent a fruitful avenue for further investigation.

Aspects of affective forecasting and availability heuristics may have been introduced by the decision to ask respondents to 'imagine' their ideal work situation when ranking the QoWL related variables. However, phrasing the question in relation to their current working circumstance would not have yielded the desired consideration of variables, and as such, the possible contamination of responses would seem to be an unavoidable outcome. Therefore, the results were interpreted with a degree of caution in response to this limitation. Moreover, the moderate concordance between groups of rankings also necessitated a degree of circumspection in the conclusions that could be drawn from this research. Furthermore, the high number of responses (N=215) overall and in some of the demographic breakdown sub-groups could also have artificially reduced concordance calculations.

However, despite the moderate concordance results, some rankings remained consistent across all groups. *Staff Development and Training* was consistently ranked as being one of the least salient QoWL variables regardless of age, gender or organisational level, while *Job Satisfaction* was consistently ranked most salient regardless of demography. *Balance between Work and Home Life* was consistently ranked as being the second most salient across all demographic groupings, with the notable exception of the Senior Management cohort, which ranked this least salient of all the QoWL related constructs. Further scrutiny of this outlier in the data would seem warranted due to the extreme difference between this cohort and all others. However, overall it would appear that the variables included were sufficiently distinct, so as to be distinguishable to respondents, as well as reflective of some of the key QoWL variables salient to employees, with *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life* being the two components almost universally agreed a being most salient.

It is recognised that in demographic groupings, cell sizes were very modest (e.g. the fact that the under 25s and the 50^{+} cohorts contained only N=30 and N=44 participants respectively). In each instance a decision was taken as to how best to segment the data to provide meaningful groupings, whilst at the same time/also maintaining an acceptable sample size. For example, when considering the best way to segment the data into life course cohorts, the author, in discussion with her supervisor concluded that this split of life course cohorts was most appropriate/logical; a decision which/this decision was made on the basis of ONS 2011 data and within the confines of needing to keep the number of groupings to three or fewer given the modest data set used. Furthermore, when considered in relation to the significant events in peoples' lives and the potential impact such events might have on their attitudes to working life and the resulting evolution of their aspirations both personally and professionally the life course cohorts seemed most representative of average life stages.

6.9 Conclusions

- The QoWL components included in the paired comparison study appear to be meaningful to people, and people can make stable and consistent distinctions between them.
- The age cohorts 40-49 and 50-65 placed higher value on QoWL than their younger counterparts, which may indicate that greater impact from effective QoWL interventions can be had amongst these cohorts.

- Public and private Sector employees showed similarity in their ratings of component salience with the exception of *Staff Development and Training.*

- Differences in the salience of QoWL components was greatest between the senior management cohort and those employees at supervisory and semi-skilled/unskilled levels, indicating that QoWL interventions may have greater impact within the organisational setting if tailored to meet these differences.

- There were little differences in salience of QoWL components by gender, indicating that the application of organisational interventions will likely have the same effect, regardless of employee gender.

- *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life* were consistently ranked the most salient components across all demographic groupings, suggesting they have the potential to have the greatest impact on employee QoWL, and as such, could present an opportunity for organisations to effectively improve QoWL by addressing the issues arising from these constructs.

- Findings indicate the salience of components to respondents on the basis of their ideal work situation, however affective bias may have distorted the results, particularly if respondents struggled to disconnect their current work situation from their ideal work situation.

- Further research might seek to build on these findings by exploring in greater depth the differences in demographic groupings with regard to their prioritisation of QoWL variables via the use of larger sample sizes for each group and by exploring breakdowns via more than one demographic, for example, by obtaining a sample size sufficient enough to explore differences by gender and age simultaneously.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Concluding Comments

7.0 General Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

The multiplicity of variables cited as impacting upon employee QoWL have been the subject of extensive inquiry over recent decades, and significant progress in relation to academic and managerial understanding of the subject has been achieved over this period. However, it remains that, there is still no universally accepted definition of the concept and no universally accepted set of core constructs. Indeed, it might be claimed that the breadth and complexity of findings is such that there is a risk of generating inertia rather than stimulating intervention amongst employers. While informed by established findings, the research reported here aimed to achieve a sharper focus, by grounding the approach to inquiry in the perspectives of employees. Specifically, the research aimed to establish the nature and extent of consensus and shared perspective over a set of core variables and their relative salience across employment sectors, job roles and job grades. The research was operationalised with reference to the following objectives:

- review of published findings on variables identified as impacting on QoWL;
- characterise employee perspectives on variables impacting on QoWL;
- establish the extent of shared perspective and relative salience of variables identified as impacting on QoWL.

The above gave rise to the following operational objectives:

- review published findings within the applied psychology, sociology, management and related literatures;
- undertake a qualitative investigation to explore and characterise employee perspectives on variables impacting on QoWL;
- based on insights from 1 and 2 above, develop a survey question set to explore the factorial structure of employee perspectives on variables impacting on QoWL;
- explore the relative salience and degree of consensus for a core set of QoWL related constructs to employees.

The findings have been presented as three complementary studies (see Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6).

7.2 The Studies - Summary of Findings

7.2.1 Study 1 – A Qualitative Exploration of Employees' Perspectives on Variables Impacting on Quality of Working Life

Study 1 comprised a qualitative exploration of employee perspectives on QoWL. This study was designed to characterise *employee perspectives,* and aimed to provide insight into not just *what,* but, critically, *why?, how?* and in *what ways?* the identified variables impact on QoWL. A thematic analysis of focus group and interview data was used to identify and articulate what presented as a set of underlying constructs.

In contrast to previous studies, which have tended to focus on a discrete number of pre-determined components (see, for example, Baltes, 1999; Judge *et al.* 2001; Wayne *et al.* 2002), or discrete populations, for example nurses (Blegen, 1993), temporary employees (De Cuyper and de Witte, 2006), or small organisations (Galinsky *et al.* 2010), Study 1 aimed to achieve a more embracing perspective, derived from a sample of respondents representing a wide array of occupations and job roles. In view of the objective of identifying core components of QoWL, alongside the intention to use the derived insights as the basis for a quantitative study in later stages of the research (Studies 2a and 2b; see Chapters 4 and 5), a thematic analysis was performed on a relatively large sample of employees derived from twenty-eight focus groups and eight one-to-one interviews. The sample comprised representatives from both the public and private sector organisations, large, medium and small enterprises and a diverse range of occupations and job grades. The breadth of the sample (see Appendix B) is considered a strength of the research and increases confidence in the generalisability of findings.

While the analysis aimed to derive a finite set of core constructs, and notable relatedness and overlap was apparent in the accounts provided by respondents, it was also apparent that there were instances where the relative *absence* of one aspect of QoWL was perceived by respondents to be offset by the *presence* of another (e.g. paramedics cited a lack of engagement and consultation but this appeared to be mediated by good peer group relationships with colleagues). A notable feature of the data was that the focus of discussions was dominated by those aspects of QoWL that were deemed to be absent or sub-optimal, rather than features that *enhanced* QoWL. While it may be that negative experiences were more cognitively available, such that positive elements were less salient to respondents, this finding might also be interpreted as lending weight to the perspective that QoWL is essentially an attrition issue, i.e. that it is

perhaps more fundamentally defined by the *'absence'* of core components rather than their *'presence*'.

The thematic analysis conducted on the data gathered in Study 1 revealed seven themes, each embodying a number of sub-themes (see table Chapter 3; Table 3.2):

- The analysis revealed a set of constructs that were interpretable through reference to published findings. No new or unique constructs were identified. The strength of this analysis is held to rest with the method of enquiry, i.e. data driven and grounded in employee accounts.

- The fact that such a diverse sample produced findings that could be characterised in terms of seven constructs provided an initial indication of the degree of shared perspective regarding core elements of QoWL. Additionally, it indicated that grounding the investigation in employee perspectives embodied promise, with respect to the aim of achieving a sharper focus on core components.

- A prominent feature was that participant accounts were dominated by articulation of components of QoWL that were cast as sub-optimal or conspicuous by their absence, indicating a model of attrition.

- The analysis of Study 1 enabled identification of those themes most prominent to employees when they talk about what impacts on their QoWL, but also highlighted the notion that these factors are often complimentary.

7.2.2 Study 2a – Quantitative Exploration of Variables Impacting on Quality of Working Life and Exploration of Demographic Differences

Study 2 was divided into two complementary tranches of activity: (2a) an exploration of the factor structure of variables contributing to QoWL and, (2b) the exploration of demographic differences. Study 2a used insights obtained from the literature review and, Study 1 to develop a large item battery, distributed to a sample of employees (N=442) as an on-line self-complete questionnaire. Paper copies were also made available to those without access to the online version. The purpose of this study was: (i) to provide a degree of confirmation and triangulation regarding the constructs identified in Study 1; (ii) to explore for the presence of additional constructs/clustering of related variables; and (iii) to test the strength and generalisability of identified phenomena on a larger, potentially more representative sample of respondents.

A Principal Components Analysis extracted six factors, which reflected a number of the themes elicited from the thematic analysis conducted in Study 1. A comparison of Study 1 themes and Study 2a factors is provided in Chapter 4, Table 4.1. A high degree of parity in the constructs was apparent.

The constructs identified in Study 2 complemented those identified in Study 1 and, similarly, were interpretable in relation to published findings. As with Study 1, no new, previously unidentified constructs were identified, but represented a sub-set which might reasonably be considered to be of high salience to employees.

7.2.3 Study 2b – Quantitative Quality of Working Life Climate Tool Development and Demographic Breakdowns

The constructs that emerged from Study 2a (Chapter 4) were refined through item analysis to produce a set of six proto-scales. Statistical testing of demographic profiles by Socio-Economic Status, age and gender (Study 2b, Chapter 5) revealed significant differences in relation to *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance*. A global finding was of greater similarity than difference, with respect to the demographic variables explored. This might reasonably be taken to indicate a high degree of shared perspective across employee groups, however the possibility of differences beyond the demographic variables explored cannot be discounted. Equally, it could mean that primary employment demographics are not a central determinant of experience of QoWL. A further possibility is that there may be weaknesses in the discriminant capacity of the developed measures to detect differences.

The developed proto-scales are believed to hold promise as a sound basis for further future development (outside the scope of the current research) into an organisation-based QoWL climate profiling tool, in the Safety Climate/Management Standards (HSE, 1999) tradition (see Chapter 5).

7.2.4 Study 3 – Exploring the Relative Salience of Components of Quality of Working Life

Study 3 set out to determine the relative salience of components of QoWL. The QoWL components presented to respondents were derived from Study 1 and 2a findings and through reference to the literature. The objective was to produce a ranking of the relative salience of headline influences on QoWL and to further explore the degree of consensus on this issue. The Method of Paired Comparison was selected due to the ease with which it can be performed, as

well as its relative greater sophistication compared to alternative techniques, such as direct ranking (see Chapter 6). Its principal advantages are two-fold: presenting items in pairs, rather than as a list, reduced cognitive load when comparing each item with the others in the set; it produces an interval, rather than an ordinal scale, that indicated the relative distance (and hence relative salience) between the items in the set. The data was then further examined to explore a range of demographic differences in the rankings of salient components and relative value placed on QoWL, by: age, employment sector (public/private), Socio-Economic Status (SES) and gender.

- It was concluded that the QoWL components included in the paired comparison study appear to be meaningful to respondents, as evidenced by the findings that they were able to make consistent distinctions between them.

- There was linear relationship in the global salience of QoWL components by age, i.e. higher value was placed on QoWL components by older employees, than younger employees, this appearing to plateau beyond the age of 50.

- *Job Satisfaction* and *Balance between Work and Home Life* were consistently ranked as the most salient components across all demographic groupings.

7.3 Discussion of Findings

The following sections discuss each of the QoWL related constructs elicited from the three studies conducted. Where the constructs were evident (in whole, or in part) across more than one study, findings are discussed in relation to each, drawing together areas of synthesis between the studies, and discussing each component in relation to published findings.

7.3.1 Investment in Staff/Training, Development and Career Progression/Staff Development and Training/Progression Opportunities

The absence, or limited availability of investment in staff training and development has been widely associated with intention to quit (Owens, 2006; Pugh, 1984; Thomas *et al.* 2000) and this was reflected in this research by comments from respondents indicating a perception that when an organisation does not invest in training and development that it transmits the message that it does not value its employees. Relatedly, respondents were sensitive to the quality of training. Where this was perceived as poor quality/low cost, an inference drawn by employees was that they were being *sold short*, this tending to transmit an implicit negative message to

staff. High quality training has been linked to higher levels of job satisfaction (see, Choo and Bowley, 2007; Kabungaidze *et al.* 2013; Siebern-Thomas, 2005). With regard to the format of training, E-Learning was widely disliked amongst respondents. At the root of this seemed to be the perspective that it was a cheaper option for employers, this again tending to feed perceptions of under-investment in staff – a finding echoed by Choo and Bowley (2007), although other authors cite a more positive profile for on-line training (see Hall and Mirvis, 1995). The key finding on this issue was that employees are sensitive not only to the availability of training but also to its nature (*'for me' - for my personal development* or 'for the organisation' e.g. product/service quality, fire safety etc.) and quality. Where employees perceive the quality to be low, or employers are believed to have selected low cost options, this can transmit negative messages to staff, contributing to perceptions of under-investment. By extension, there may be grounds for concluding that equivalent financial investment in a small number of high quality training opportunities, rather than a larger number of low quality opportunities may have a more positive impact on employee perceptions in this area.

The sub-theme *Investment in Staff* was a recurrent element in later phases of the research. It was a feature of the construct identified as *Training, Development and Career Progression* in Study 2, and its relative salience was explored in Study 3. The exploration of demographic differences (Chapter 5: Study 2b) revealed no significant difference in this component by respondent age. This finding appears to be at odds with published claims that the drive to achieve (self-actualisation) diminishes with age (Aldag and Brief, 1977; Cook and Wall, 1979; Hackman and Oldham, 1976), that older employees perceive that they have less opportunity to access training and development opportunities (Weyman *et al.* 2013), and that their satisfaction with promotion opportunities declines with age (Morrow and McElroy, 1987). Rather it chimes with claims that the aspirations of older workers are no different to those of younger workers (Katz, 1978; Warr *et al.* 1979).

The subject of *Progression Opportunities* raised issues from respondents surrounding lack of clarity with regards career path and control over that progression. This issue was identified by Igbaria and Greenhaus (1992) in their study of Management Information System managers and professionals. Notably, these authors report perceptions of career advancement prospects (positive or negative) impacting on job satisfaction, career satisfaction and commitment to the organisation (see also; Compton, 1978; Rice *et al.* 1989; Woodruff, 1980). Furthermore, clarity of opportunity was cited as being of high importance to respondents, with some of the Fire and Ambulance Service personnel expressing frustration at the apparent opaqueness of career progression within their service. In this instance it may be that communication (or lack thereof) is at fault and, introducing greater transparency around career progression opportunities would

be of benefit. While the Recruitment Consultancy employees were generally satisfied that they had a clear idea of how and where their career might progress within the organisation, the more widely expressed sentiments on this issue reflect alignment with published findings. Notably, limited opportunities for personal development opportunities are generally regarded to impact negatively on job satisfaction (see, for example, Choo and Bowley, 2007; Rice *et al.* 1989; Siebern-Thomas, 2005).

In relation to employment *sector*, both the public and private sector respondents in Study 3 ranked *Staff Development and Training* the least salient of those presented. In psychophysical terms, the relative distance below the next item was greater for private than public sector respondents. Published findings on public/private sector differences and training/development is limited. However, there is some suggestion that public sector employees place higher value on this than private sector employees (Houston, 2000; Jurkiewicz *et al.* 1998; Karl and Sutton, 1998). Conversely, other authors report that civil servants find opportunities for self-development less motivating (Buelens and Van den Broek, 2007).

Turning to *Investment in Staff* and SES, no significant differences were found in Study 2. However, when examined in the context of findings from Study 3, differences in the salience of this component were apparent, with the semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranking this component more salient than supervisors and managers. Again, published findings are relatively sparse on this issue, although the 2012 *Skills and Employment Survey* (Green *et al.* 2012) found that access to training opportunities are distributed unequally in favour of those with higher educational attainment. A plausible explanation for the Study 3 finding, that aligns with the general emerging picture that salience seems to be amplified where the desired attribute is absent or in short supply, is that this component presents as more salient to those with limited access to training opportunities, i.e. the semi/unskilled.

Examination of *Training, Development and Career Progression* by gender showed no significant difference (Study 2b), although women ranked *Staff Development and Training* marginally more salient than men in Study 3. Published research suggests that some employers restrict access to training for women on the basis of their perceived return from it (see, for example, Probert, cited in Boud and Garrick (eds.), 2001), despite the fact that women consistently express interest in opportunities to learn (Lawrence, 1994). Savage (1992) suggests that restricted access in the workplace is reflected in higher rates of women seeking education through sources external to their employing organisation. It is perhaps possible that the slightly higher salience afforded to this aspect of QoWL by women reflects a perceived or actual restriction of access to training in the workplace, i.e. as with other issues the higher salience

perhaps reflects the perceived relative absence of this feature, rather than value placed on its presence. However, although access to training and development was ranked lowest of the QoWL items, when examined by gender it needs to be kept in mind that the ranking was of those components of QoWL identified as important through the previous studies, and in reference to the literature, i.e. its relatively low position should not be taken to imply that the issue is of low importance. Rather, it appears to have less value placed upon it than the other important components in the item set.

7.3.2 Reward - Pay and Benefits, Non-Financial and Normative Feedback

7.3.2.1 Financial Rewards

Economists and Psychologists differ in their perspectives on how individuals perceive their economic well-being, but both cite linkages to job satisfaction, absence and intention to quit. However, a number of commentators highlight the role of social comparison here, stressing the salience of pay relative to the employees' chosen reference group, rather than pay in absolute terms (Clark, 1997). While economists suggest that satisfaction with pay is based on a model of comparison against opportunities in the labour market, psychologists suggest that the reference group to which employees look to compare their relative financial equity is more subjective (Watson *et al.* 1996). While the psychological perspective does not consider economic factors in the individual's selection of reference group, the economists' perspective does not take into account those instances where an employee feels comparatively underpaid but is unable to act on this belief due to labour market conditions, for example. In such circumstances an employee may seek to address the resulting cognitive dissonance through adjustment/re-evaluation of their comparison group (Greenberg, 1993).

The item *Pay and Benefits* was a component of Study 3, the results of which showed the Senior Management cohort ranking it least salient of the SES cohorts. This might be interpreted as supportive of a model of attrition, whereby those with the highest pay (the Senior Management cohort) are satisfied with their financial recompense and so do not rate it as salient in relation to their QoWL. However, the relationship between pay and job satisfaction is a complex one, with published findings suggesting that rather than being about absolute pay, employee job satisfaction is dependent upon pay in relation to those they consider to be in their reference group (Clark *et al.* 2009; Stutzer, 2002). While published literature suggests that higher paid employees are more satisfied with their pay, they do not show higher levels of overall *Job Satisfaction* (Clark, 1996).

When explored by gender, *Pay and Benefits* showed male respondents ranking this item more salient than their female counterparts (although the differences are small). Research relating to gender differences in satisfaction with pay rates reveals mixed results, with some suggesting there is no difference (Bokemeier and Lacy, 1986), while others cite men as being generally less satisfied with their pay than women (Walman, 1994; cited in Clark, 1997), despite the fact that women often earn less than their male counterparts in comparable jobs (Miceli and Lane, 1991; cited in Williams, 2006). This finding seems to counter the premise that salience increases as a product of scarcity, i.e. if this premise is accepted then it would seem reasonable to predict that women would have ascribed higher salience to pay in Study 3. However, when considered in the context of the extensive literature on gender differences in aspirations in the workplace (see, for example, Davidson and Burke, 2002), it seems possible that this result may reflect differences in gender expectations from work.

The exploration of *Fair Treatment and Equity* in relation to pay and benefits in Study 3, revealed a number of demographic differences. In relation to age, this component was ranked one of the lowest in overall salience by all cohorts but was least salient to the 20-29 year old cohort group. If, as on other issues, this result is interpreted as higher salience, reflecting greater dissatisfaction with current arrangements, it may be that the apparent linear relationship with age reflects the widely reported orientation that pay and benefits should increase with age/tenure (see Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Alternatively, or possibly in addition, it may reflect perceptions of age discrimination amongst older employees (Weyman, 2009; Metcalf and Meadows, 2010).

In relation to Sector, *Pay and Benefits* was ranked more salient by private sector respondents, than by public sector employees. This would appear to be consistent with published findings that public sector employees place higher value on interesting and intrinsically rewarding work, while private sector employees tend to rate wage rates as more important (Buelens and Broeck, 2007; Cacioppe and Mock, 1984; Hopkins, 1983, cited in Schneider and Vaught, 1993; Karl and Sutton, 1998; Kilpatrick *et al.* 1964, cited in Wittmer, 1991; Newstrom *et al.* 1976; Rainey, 1982; Solomon, 1986). However, the degree of difference detected in Study 3 was modest. Furthermore, other studies report no difference (Baldwin, 1991) and public sector employees' rank pay as more important than private sector employees (Crewson, 1997; Maidani, 1991).

Turning to SES, the semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked this component as most salient. Perceptions of fairness over pay rates have been positively related to job satisfaction in managers of small to medium size (SMEs) businesses (Watson *et al.* 1996). Perceptions of being underpaid has been associated with lower performance (Lord and Hohenfeld, 1979), and increased divergent behaviour such as theft and vandalism (Hollinger and Clark, 1983), with

one study reporting a 250% increase in workplace theft in response to a 15% pay cut (Greenberg, 1990). Such negative reactions to perceived pay inequity appear to be increased where the employee feels the reason for the inequity is inadequately or unsympathetically explained (Greenberg, 1991).

Pay and Benefits have been associated with employee perceptions of fair reward (Williams, 2006), which could be interpreted as supportive of the current research findings, where in Study 3 salience was found to increase with age. This finding might indicate that older employees perceive that they should earn more than their younger counterparts on account of their greater experience. However, it is difficult to isolate the differences in relation to pay and benefits, as these aspects of working life often do increase with tenure, which naturally coincides with increasing age.

7.3.2.2 Non-Financial Rewards

This facet of QoWL relates to rewards in any form other than that of a financial nature (i.e. pay enhancements, bonuses, honoraria etc.). Such rewards might take the form of recognition for good performance/contribution or a team night out in recognition of good work, for example. Such rewards must be meaningful to the employee to be perceived as such. Non-financial *Reward and Recognition* was not selected for inclusion in Study 3, as feedback from the pilot phase indicated that the terms *Pay and Benefits* and *Fair Treatment and Equality* were better understood by respondents as reflecting these aspects of QoWL, as well as having aspects in common with the components included in studies 1 and 2.

In relation to *Non-Financial Rewards* it was apparent that these need to be meaningful to, and, are indeed valued by respondents, as demonstrated by comments from members of the mixed occupation focus group and the Recruitment Consultants involved in Study 1, *"You can make money anywhere but to find somewhere you can make money and be recognised for what you're doing is just a massive bonus"* (Male, Trainee Consultant, Recruitment Consultancy). This finding is supported in the literature (see for example, Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Shore, 1995). The degree of control an employee has over their attainment of reward was also cited, combined with a desire for clear goals and an understanding of managerial expectations of what needs to be done to achieve a given reward (see, for example, Kalleberg, 1977).

The exploration of demographic differences in Study 2 revealed no significant differences by age, SES, or gender for this aspect of QoWL, in contrast with much of the published literature. With regards age, it is suggested that older workers report that their effort is under-

recognised/under-rewarded (Weyman *et al.* 2013), a perspective not reflected in the current research. In relation to SES, it was expected that blue collar workers might rate pay as being of higher importance than white collar workers, who value normative rewards more highly (Blauner, 1964; Goldthorpe and Lockwood, 1968), but this was not found to be the case in the current research. Published literature relating to gender differences and *Non-Financial Reward* suggests that women are more appreciative of normative rewards than men (Kovach, 1987), but this was not found to be the case in the research reported here.

However, the findings of the current study might indicate that the unskilled/semi-skilled cohort, being at the greatest 'mercy' of organisational process, and at the lowest level in an organisation, rank this item more salient than the higher SES cohorts due to a perceived lack of control over *Fair Treatment and Equality* and the degree of sensitivity/perceived honesty with which explanations are delivered; likely defined and decided at higher levels of the organisation.

When explored by gender, female respondents ranked *Fair Treatment and Equality* less salient than males. Jacobs and Steinberg (1990) suggest that those roles more typically carried out by women (e.g. caring and secretarial) are not valued as highly as those roles more typically undertaken by men (Gavron, 1983). Plausibly, this may offer some explanation for the lower ranking of this component, if women themselves place lower value on their vocations. Other reported findings suggest that men and women place equal value on salary (Crosby, 1982; Golding *et al.* 1983), despite women's pay being lower than that of their male counterparts, with women earning on average just under £5000 less a year than men in full time work (Bokemeier and Lacy, 1986; *The Guardian*, November 2013), while others suggest that women place greater value on interpersonal relationships (Nieva and Gutek, 1981). The wage differential might be expected to increase the perceived salience of pay to women, but this does not appear to be the case, which in itself might lend support to theories that women value different aspects of work than their male counterparts. Furthermore, it has been suggested that women have lower pay expectations than men for the same job (Desmarais and Curtis, 1997; Sauser and York, 1978), with women placing more emphasis on how they did the job than the outcome of the work they have done (Farmer and Fyans, 1980), which might indicate why they rank pay as less salient. Additionally, it has been suggested that not only do women have lower expectations regarding pay than their male counterparts (Desmarais and Curtis, 1997; Sauser and York, 1978), thus not so preoccupied with inequity, but that they do tend to relate their pay to that of other women in similar roles rather than to their male colleagues (Chelser and Goodman, 1976; Major *et al.* 1984).

7.3.2.3 Normative Feedback

Normative Feedback (from more senior staff, in particular line managers) was widely articulated by respondents in Study 1, primarily in relation to its absence, i.e. lack of feedback (positive or negative), or being limited to negative aspects. Not surprisingly, Study 1 respondents expressed a desire for higher levels of positive feedback, notably in the area of recognition of their efforts. Effort/performance has previously been identified as a form of reward, said to be most valued when delivered by senior levels of management, although still valued when delivered by lower level managers (see, for example, Wayne *et al.* 2002). Employee perceptions of how much, including the quality of feedback received, have been identified as impacting on worker engagement (Krause, 2005) motivation, sickness absence, work-related stress and staff turnover rates (Lunt *et al.* 2007).

7.3.3 Work-Life Balance / Balance between Work and Home Life

The theme identified as *Job Demands* in Study 1 comprised the components *Work-Life Balance, Flexibility and Choice, Cultural Expectations* and *Time Pressure.* Reflecting findings reported by authors such as Baruch (2000) and Gajendran and Harrison (2007), Study 1 respondents perspectives centred on the negative impact of long working hours, long commutes to and from work, as well as mobile and on-line remote access. Indeed, impacts relating to the latter are widely cited within the literature (e.g. Baruch, 2000; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Hill *et al.* 1998; Jenson, 1994; Primps, 1984; Shamir and Salomon, 1985), particularly, in relation to the blurring of the boundary between work and home life.

Recent years has also reportedly seen an increase in employees working longer hours – up to 60 hours a week in some instances (Bittman, 1999; Wooden, 2001). Research conducted in Australia highlights a range of associated negative impacts on QoWL, global (work and non-work) quality of life and employee health outcomes, and what amounts to lower pay per hour, when unpaid overtime is taken into account (ACIRRT, 1998). Furthermore, those employees working far in excess of their contractual hours (15+ hours per week) are said to be more likely to do so unpaid than those working fewer additional hours. Unpaid overtime is said to be most prevalent among managers and professionals (Wooden, 2001). Similarly, a study of unpaid overtime in nursing staff in Canada also found an increasing trend in recent years, leading to increased work-related stress, which, in turn, impacted on intention to quit (Zeytinoglu *et al.*

2006). The expectation that an employee will work ‘unpaid’ overtime is also widely culturally normed.

Regardless of the reason for the longer hours employees seem to be working in recent times, what is perhaps most salient from the perspectives of QoWL is evidence of negative impacts on employee well-being and orientation to work. Negative effects of ‘over commitment’ to work and perceived time pressure have been associated with cardiovascular ill-health (Bosma *et al.* 1988; Lynch *et al.* 1997), increased blood pressure, increased heart rate (Vrijkotte *et al.* 2000) and high psychological stress and 'burnout' (Demerouti *et al.* 2001).

The high salience of *Work-Life Balance* was reflected in Studies 2 and 3. The exploration of demographic differences in Study 2 revealed that the cohorts aged 25-49 years and 50+ years ranked this item more salient, than their younger counterparts (aged 16-25 years). Plausibly, this profile may reflect increased home originations amongst newlyweds (35 years is the average age for marriage, ONS 2011) and grandchildren/elderly care obligations, and/or the higher value placed on leisure time amongst the over 50's as well (see Weyman *et al.* 2013). There are also claims that older employees often feel that positive employer *Work-Life Balance* polices are more available to younger employees, principally related to the care of children (Wray *et al.* 2009). As with other components, it seems possible that the higher salience ascribed to *Work-Life Balance* by older employees may reflect limited access in many workplace contexts (see Weyman *et al.* 2012).

Insights from Study 3 corroborate those of Study 2, providing further evidence of a linear relationship between *Work-Life Balance* and chronological age, i.e. older employees place higher value on this than the young. This finding is consistent with established insights on *Work-Life Balance* and age (see, for example, Kilbom, 1999; Weyman *et al.* 2013; Woodward, 2000).

Differences in the relative salience of *Balance between Work and Home Life* by sector were found to be minimal, with private sector employees ranking it slightly higher than their public sector counterparts. Research suggests that opportunities for flexible working arrangements tend to be more widely available in the public than the private sector, this, intuitively, potentially enhancing opportunities for meeting employee *Work-Life Balance* ambitions (Buelens and Van der Broek, 2007; Drew *et al.* 2003; Gregory, 2009; Persaud, 2001; Russell, 2009; Sparks *et al.* 1997). By extension, findings from Study 3, that highlight the higher salience ascribed to *Work-Life Balance* by private sector employees, might again perhaps be interpreted as evidence of increased salience where access to this feature is restricted or absent,

i.e. private sector employees place higher value on *Work-Life Balance* due to the fact that it is less available to them.

Turning to SES, findings revealed notable differences, with the Senior Managers ranking this item as less salient than other groups (supervisors/line managers and the semi-skilled/unskilled). In fact, Study 3 indicated a negative linear effect with job status, i.e. the least skilled place highest value on the balance between work and home life, while the highest level SES cohort placed least value on this aspect of QoWL.

Although the findings obtained, add to the emergent global finding from this research (i.e. that the value placed on components of QoWL owes more to their paucity than their abundance), they contrast with claims of greater negative work-home spillover amongst individuals in higher status roles (Schieman *et al.* 2006). However, it does echo findings from the Whitehall studies, which challenged traditional perspectives on the relationship between work stress and job grade (Marmot *et al.* 1995; also see Vaananen *et al.* 2008).

If SES can be considered to relate to job grade, linkages to levels of autonomy are apparent, which could provide some explanation for this result, i.e. individuals in more senior roles are likely to have greater control over their work schedule, which could act as a mediating factor (Karasek, 1979). Furthermore, individuals in higher status jobs also benefit from higher income with which to fund others to share the burden of family responsibilities (e.g. child care and domestic duties), meaning that a higher proportion of the time they do have away from work can be spent on leisure and quality time with their family (McLeod and Nonnemaker, 1999). Thus, the impact of reduced work-life balance may be lessened within those with higher status jobs.

Exploration of differences by gender revealed some small differences, although male respondents ranked work-life balance marginally more salient than females. At initial encounter, it may have been logical to hypothesise that women would place a higher value on work-life balance than men, given their higher rates of acting as primary carer/'home-maker' (Almeida *et al.* 1993; Gavron, 1983; Zimmerman and Addison, 1997); this being reinforced by evidence that women are more frequently absent from work than men on account of family responsibilities (Steers and Rhodes, 1978), alongside evidence that families with younger children report experiencing greater difficulty balancing their work and home life (Bedeian *et al.* 1988). However, if considered within the context of what seems to have emerged as a global finding, that in most instances the salience of QoWL components reflects their relative 'absence', rather than 'presence', the higher value placed on this feature by men is perhaps interpretable in these terms. However, a more prudent conclusion is that the revealed gender differences were modest,

and perhaps more reasonably reflect the findings of authors such as Eagle *et al.* (1997), Frone *et al.* (1992a) and Pleck *et al.* (1980), who report finding no difference in relation to aspects of work-family conflict.

7.3.4 Flexibility and Choice/Flexibility/Flexible Working Arrangements

Linkages between *Work-Life Balance* and the component identified as *Flexibility and Choice* were evident in relation to long hours and flexibility of working hours of work location. However, a key point of distinction between these components is held to be that *Flexibility and Choice* in the focus groups and interviews conducted in Study 1 and the definitions of this component in Study 2 and 3 were focussed on the degree of autonomy an employee has over the organisation of their work and managing their workload, while *Work-Life Balance* focussed on time outside of work and how gaining sufficient balance of work and home life might be achieved. Greater flexibility over working hours and autonomy over the organisation of work was almost universally perceived as a benefit by respondents and this is also reflected in the literature; with a number of authors highlighting linkages to higher levels of job satisfaction (De Cuyper and De Witte, 2004; Finn, 2001) and lower rates of absenteeism (Aronsson and Goransson, 1999; Baltes *et al.* 1999). The high value vested in autonomy in relation to organising ones working day/workload is also supported in the literature (see, for example, Cathcart *et al.* 2004; Liljegren and Ekberg, 2009; Walton, 1974; Watson, 2003).

The high value placed on *Flexibility* was an aspect of QoWL evident across all three studies, increasing confidence in its importance to employees. Published findings suggest that *Flexibility* tends to be particularly highly valued by older employees, who may for example, need to vary their hours to support elderly dependants, or attend to their own health needs (Smeaton *et al.* 2009; Watson *et al.* 2003; Weyman *et al.* 2012). However, while a relationship between age and salience of *Flexibility* was apparent in Study 3, the relationship itself was not linear. This item was ranked highest by the 40-49 year-old cohort, but marginally less, by the 50-65 year old cohort group. The findings of a non-linear relationship with age requires further consideration and elaboration. Specifically, given evidence of the desire amongst older employees for higher levels of leisure time and a stronger disposition to engage in flexible and part-time employment (Vickerstaff *et al.* 2008; Weyman *et al.* 2012), a clear linear relationship with age might have been predicted. Tentative interpretations of this finding are considered to be: (i) a higher proportion of 40-49 year-olds with child and/or adult caring responsibilities, possibly simultaneously; and/or (ii) a higher proportion of the 50-65 year-old group being already employed in flexible, typically part-time/casual work, meaning that a higher proportion of this

group had realised their flexible employment ambitions, and/or (iii) the 50-65 year-old cohort constitutes a survivor population, i.e. those still in employment at this age represent a sub-set of older workers who do not desire greater flexibility or others who perhaps do, having taken early retirement or have migrated to flexible working arrangements, such that they are under-reported in the sample. Ultimately, this issue would benefit from further exploration.

Flexible Working Arrangements was ranked slightly higher by private sector respondents than their public sector counterparts in Study 3. Research suggests that flexibility over working hours is often more widely available within the public sector (Felstead, 2002; Gregory, 2009; Russell, 2009). If the salience by its relative absence hypothesis is accepted, it is plausible that the higher value placed on this by private sector respondents reflect restricted availability.

In relation to SES, an expectation might be that access is more restricted due to differences in the nature of managerial, white collar/service sector and traditional blue collar work (see, for example Blauner, 1964; Van der Doef and Maes, 1999; Bond and Galinsky, 2011; Weyman *et al.* 2012). Indeed, the semi-skilled/unskilled cohort ranked this aspect of QoWL highest of the three SES cohorts in Study 3. Again this finding can perhaps be interpreted with reference to the perspective that salience of components of QoWL are amplified by their relative absence, rather than their presence.

In relation to gender and *Flexibility*, Study 2 revealed significant differences between the attitudes of male and female respondents. These appear to be consistent with findings reported by Sloane and Williams (2000), alongside evidence which suggests that women value *Flexibility* more than their male counterparts (McCrate, 2005), as it allows them to spend more time with non-work caring responsibilities (Grantham and Paul, 1995). However, there is some inconsistency here with the findings in Study 3, where, female respondents ranked *Flexible Working Arrangements* as less salient than males.

7.3.5 Job Demands

A core component of Job demands as articulated by respondents in Study 1 was *Time Pressure*, with perceptions of peer pressure to work long hours representing a key discussion point. For example, amongst paramedics *Time Pressure* was discussed in relation to managerial pressure to meet defined Key Performance Indicators, notably in relation to meeting 8-minute response time objectives. *Time Pressure* was usually cited by respondents as a source of work stress. These findings are supported in the literature, whereby *Time Pressure* has been linked to a number of negative health outcomes (see for example, Bosma *et al.* 1998; Demerati *et al.* 2001;

Lynch *et al.* 1997; Vrijkotte *et al.* 2000). Furthermore, and closely linked to some of the discussion points related to *Flexibility and Choice*, some authors suggest that it is not the time pressure itself that causes the stress but the perception of a lack of autonomy of what one must achieve in a given time frame (see the Job-Demand Control Model (JDC); Karasek, 1979). This concept of *Job Demands* and *control* have been widely explored in the literature (e.g. van der Doef and Maes, 1999; Karasek *et al.* 1988; Schwartz *et al.* 1988) in relation to how jobs are designed (see, Hackman and Oldham's *Job Diagnostic Survey*, 1975) and decision making (see, for example, Spector, 1986). Where employee sense of control is low, the potential negative impact of *Job Demand* is said to be high, with linkages to job and life dissatisfaction, depression and exhaustion (Doi, 2005; Karasek, 1979), late onset of cardiovascular disease (Karasek *et al.* 1982) and with myocardial infarction (Karasek *et al.* 1988; Schwartz *et al.* 1988). Further negative effects of high demand/low control situations are reported to be late arrival at work and absence from work (Adler and Golan, 1981; Blau, 1985), as well as increased disposition to seek alternative employment (Mayes and Ganster, 1988). Application of the Job-Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979) by Dwyer and Ganster (1991) found associations between high psychological demand and employee absence where perceived work control is low, seemingly adding further support to the model.

It would appear then, that negative impacts of high job demands can be alleviated by greater role autonomy (see *Flexibility*) but that the interplay between the factors is not entirely clear (Van Der Doef and Maes, 1999). It is also possible that SES may constitute a contributory influence in negative health outcomes, with associations having been made with higher rates of morbidity amongst lower socio-economic groups (Marmot *et al.* 2001). The effort-reward imbalance (ERI) model (Siegrist, 1996) proposes an alternative hypothesis; that it is when the reward achieved for the effort expended are considered to be unbalanced, that stress is experienced. This in turn may result in cardiovascular ill-health and stress reactions.

The ERI model further incorporates personality factors that result in the employee desiring, and working towards approval. Over-commitment may then mediate the impact of imbalance (De Jonge *et al.* 2000). This model suggests that the imbalance of salary and esteem are the key factors in employee stress, but omits any influence of the degree of autonomy – the central premise of the JDC model. Neither model allow for the consideration of other aspects of QoWL that have been related to employee well-being (Bakker and Demerouti, 2006). Both models have been criticised for presenting too simplistic a picture of job demand within the complex organisational environment (De Jonge *et al.* 1999), and this may account for some of the lack of clarity surrounding the exact nature of factors at work here. The Job Demand-Control-Support

model (JDCS) (Johnson and Hall, 1988) does extend the original JDC model (Karasek 1979) with the addition of support, but perhaps the picture is even more complex than this.

Whilst widely articulated within the literature, *Job demands* did not emerge as a component in Study 2 and, as a consequence was not included in the item set applied in Study 3. Rather, aspects relating to job demands appeared to be largely subsumed within the factor identified as *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance* in Study 2. This is not, however, to imply that job demands are unimportant, rather that they seem to present as overflow impacts on work-life balance.

7.3.6 Communication

7.3.6.1 Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)/Relationship with your Manager

Leader-Member Exchange/Relationship with your Manager relates to employees' relationship with their immediate line manager encompassing aspects of supervisor/manager recognition of good work; perceptions of fair treatment by one's supervisor/manager, as compared with their peers; supervisor/manager expectations of what an employee can achieve in the working day; and, the degree to which employees feel they are supported by, and can trust their supervisor/manager. A number of respondents in Study 1 highlighted the importance of effective *Leader-Member Exchange* (*LMX*), some citing poor *LMX* as a reason for leaving previous jobs. Aspects relating to *LMX* were a prominent feature in all three studies.

The exploration of demographic variability in Study 2 revealed no significant differences in employee attitudes to *LMX* by age, although Study 3 (which characterised this aspect of QoWL as *Relationship with your Manager*) revealed this component to be more salient to the two older age cohorts than the younger two. Generational Theory (Strauss and Howe, 1991) suggests that there are age cohort differences regarding what employee's desire from their managers, with younger employees expecting more of a mentoring relationship (Bradford and Raines, 1992), while older employees are said to possess an inherent mistrust of those in management positions.

In relation to Sector, lack of accountability to external sources has been said to lead managers in the public sector to manage more through control than collaboration (Rainey *et al.* 1995). If this is accepted, it may account for public sector employees ranking *Relationship with your Manager* more highly than their private sector counterparts in Study 3. However, Karl and Sutton (1998) report no significant difference in private and public sector employee satisfaction with 'supervision'.

As in the case of other components, evidence from previous explorations of SES differences in perspectives on *LMX* is very limited. However, there is evidence that manager's perceptions of what is important to employees shows disparity in relation to what employees perceive to be important (Kovach, 1987; 1995; Young *et al.* 2011; unpublished) and that the greater the Socio-Economic distance between leader and member, the lower the quality of communication between them (Green *et al.* 1996). Study 3 findings appear to, at least partially, reinforce this, in indicating a relationship between the value placed on *LMX* and job-grade, with the Semi-Skilled/Unskilled cohort ranking it most salient of the three. However, the relationship was found to be non-linear, with supervisors rating *LMX* lowest of the three grades, and Senior Management in between the two. It has not proved possible to arrive at a plausible explanation for this relationship on the basis of findings from the study reported here, moreover, the relative dearth of published findings on this issue means that these findings must remain unexplained; and potentially a topic for further empirical investigation.

Both Studies 2 and 3 found no differences by gender in relation to *LMX*/*Relationship with your Manager,* which would appear to be at odds with published findings that suggest that the greater the difference between leader and member, the lower the quality of exchange between the two (Duchon *et al.* 1986; Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989; Vecchio and Brazil, 2007). Given that a majority of managers are male (Ayman and Korabik, 2010), one might expect to see female respondents less satisfied than their male counterparts with the *LMX* they experience. The findings of the current research would appear to be aligned with the finding that women are generally more satisfied with their leaders than male employees (Schneider and Vaught, 1993).

7.3.6.2 Involvement, Engagement and Consultation

Communication embodied two components, at an organisational level, to include structures and procedures relating to employee *Involvement, Engagement and Consultation;* and, at the work team level *Leader-Member Exchange.* Employee engagement is widely cited as leading to positive organisational outcomes (see, for example, Kim, 2002; Siegel and Ruh, 1973), although some authors have questioned the strength of effects in this area (Wagner, 1994). Study 1 findings lend support to the general perspective within this area, with respondents appearing to place significant value on *Involvement, Engagement and Consultation*. The degree to which respondents felt their organisation involved them varied considerably, although all of them felt it an important contributor to their QoWL. This aspect of QoWL did not however feature as a factor to emerge from Study 2 and, as a result, was not featured in Study 3 due to the need to limit the items included to a manageable number.

7.3.7 Job Satisfaction

Social Value the sub-theme within the theme of *Job Satisfaction* as identified in Study 1 presented intrinsic component as particularly important to both the paramedics and Fire Service personnel, although it was also articulated by a small number of the other respondents. For the paramedics and Fire Service personnel, *Social Value* experienced through their work filled some of the deficits they felt were evident elsewhere in relation to their QoWL, i.e. in the sense of a balancing/offsetting effect. While references to this are scarce in the literature, a deficit in this area of QoWL has been associated with intention to quit (Agho *et al.* 1993; Castor and Spector, 1987; Cote and Morgan, 2002, Lambert *et al.* 2001) and performance (Brown *et al.* 1985; Iaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985; MacKenzie *et al.* 1998).

Interpreted in Studies 2 and 3 as (Intrinsic) *Job Satisfaction*, this item was ranked most salient of all the aspects of QoWL in Study 3 by all cohort groups. Research findings on *Job Satisfaction* and age are mixed, with some authors suggesting that younger employees report lower *Job Satisfaction*, on account of having higher qualifications, and as a result, higher expectations (Glenn *et al.* 1977). Similarly, Hoppock (1936) suggests that *Job Satisfaction* increases with age, as employees who are unhappy either leave for other employment, or accept the situation in which they find themselves (also see Stagner, 1975; Staines and Quinn, 1979; Weaver, 1980). Study 3 findings appear to mirror this. However, if the previously highlighted interpretation that salience is a product of paucity/degraded experience is applied in this instance, then the current research appears to be at odds with these findings, but aligned with findings which highlight increased focus/higher value placed upon intrinsic job satisfaction amongst older employees (Weyman *et al.* 2012).

In relation to Sector, publicised findings present a mixed picture, with some asserting that public sector employees are generally more satisfied (DeSantis and Durst, 1996); some suggesting that private sector employees are the more satisfied (Baldwin and Farley, 1991; Schneider and Vaught, 1993) and others finding no difference (Lewis, 1991; Steel and Warner, 1990). Taken as a whole, research findings in this area reflect a broad consensus that public sector employees are more intrinsically motivated (Cacioppe and Mock, 1984; Crewson, 1987); and this would appear to be supported in the accounts of public sector workers in Study 1, e.g. the fire and Ambulance Service respondents commented that helping others was a significant source of satisfaction for them. Study 3 suggests little public-private sector difference in relative salience of this aspect of QoWL, although both ranked it the most salient of all items presented for consideration.

Statistical testing by SES revealed no significant differences in Study 2. By contrast, Study 3 indicated a linear relationship, with the Senior Managers cohort assigning this the least salience, and the Semi-Skilled/Unskilled the highest. If the emergent model of amplified salience due to relative scarcity is accepted here, these findings could be interpreted in accordance with the general perspective in published findings that greater task variety increases *Job Satisfaction* (see for example, Blauner, 1960; Watson, 1995).

No significant differences were found in *Job Satisfaction* between the male and female profiles in Study 2. This would appear to represent a divergence from some published findings. Clark for example reports that two thirds of women report overall *Job Satisfaction*, as opposed to only half of men (Clark, 1996). Furthermore, when different facets of *Job Satisfaction* have been explored, research suggests that men tend to derive greater *Job Satisfaction* from extrinsic rewards (Glenn *et al.* 1977) and more interesting work (Kovach, 1987). However, it is possible that this picture may have changed, given that most of the studies that report on this issue were conducted in the 1970's and 80's. Study 3 showed female respondents rating *Job Satisfaction* as slightly higher in salience than their male counterparts, which could be interpreted in accordance with the findings of Clark (1996; above).

7.3.8 Trust, Fairness and Equity

Trust, fairness and Equity relates to employee perceptions of fair treatment compared with their peers, as well as more broadly, culturally and morally referenced notions of fairness. A core facet relates to *local* social comparisons e.g. Employees' beliefs over whether they are treated the same as their colleagues e.g. over opportunities for advancement and in relation to recognition and reward for effort.

In relation to *Trust, Fairness and Equity,* Study 1 elicited comments relating to dissatisfaction when employees felt some colleagues got more favourable treatment than themselves, described as *"if your face fits"*. Such sentiments have been said to relate to perceptions of interactional (in)justice, whereby favouritism is (actually, or believed to be) shown towards some staff members (Bies and Moag, 1986). For example, amongst the Fire Service respondents, there was a sense of unfairness between retained and full-time fire fighters, with retained staff feeling that, whilst being expected to carry out the same duties as their full-time counterparts, they were not afforded the same rigorous levels of training. Conversely, full-time fire fighters felt that the retained teams did not have to go through such a rigorous selection procedure as they themselves had. Such perceptions are consistent with research relating to perceptions of procedural justice within organisations, where the application of procedures is perceived to be

inconsistent/unfair (Bies and Moag, 1986). *Trust, fairness and Equity* does not appear to be perceived in the absolute sense. Rather it is a more subjective concept, perceived in terms of the employees' perception of their treatment, as compared with that of salient reference group(s) or individuals. For example, the retained fire fighters in Study 1 (Chapter 3) perceived that they were treated inequitably in comparison with the full-time fire fighters, in terms of quality of training in spite of the fact that both groups carried out the same duties. However, what this literature does indicate is that comparison is often the outcome of perceptions of threat from others (e.g. Amabile and Glazebrook, 1982; Rofe, 1984; Suls, 1977), whereby the individual or group that perceives the threat will tend to come from those at the level below them in the organisation (Wills, 1983). That is not to suggest though, that social comparison cannot enable self-enhancement (Hakmiller, 1966). Further exploration of this aspect of QoWL would seem warranted.

In relation to employment Sector, *Fair Treatment and Equity* was ranked more salient by public sector than private sector employees. This might be interpreted as reflecting findings that public sector organisations tend to have more formal processes in place (Perry and Rainey, 1988) and that a greater number of procedures seems to enhance perceptions of organisational/procedural justice (Leventhal, 1980). Published findings present a conflicting picture in respect of sector and perceptions of fair treatment, with some authors suggesting that perceptions of organisational justice are, in fact, lower amongst public sector employees (Cole and Flint, 2003; Kurland and Egan, 1999). Furthermore, if the results of Study 3 are interpreted such that those ranking this item higher in salience might be doing so because they perceive their current situation as unjust, then this would indicate that public sector employees believe that they experience less *Fair Treatment and Equity*.

7.3.9 Support

7.3.9.1 Camaraderie/Colleague Support and Team Work

Camaraderie/Colleague Support and Team Work embodies employee perceptions that they have good working relationships, friendship and support from their colleagues.

The theme *Social Cohesion* was condensed into a single sub-theme; *Camaraderie,* which is held to relate to the importance of social relations, that is perhaps most intuitively, but not limited to, team working. Within the context of this sub-theme, respondents in Study 1 explained the degree to which co-worker/peer support was a benefit, especially in busy or stressful times at work. This element was reflected by all four occupational groups sampled – the Fire Service

personnel, Ambulance Service personnel, Recruitment Consultants and the Mining company employees. The sentiments expressed by Study 1 respondents appear to lend support to the 'buffer hypothesis' (Seer *et al.* 1983), which proposes that social support acts as a buffer against workplace stress (also see Kivimaki *et al.* 2002; Marmot *et al.* 1995). While the research reported here supports the findings of Seers *et al.* (1983), not all the literature agrees, with some reporting no such associations (see for e.g. LaRocco and Jones, 1978; Pinneau, 1976).

Although *Social Support* did not emerge as a component in the Study 2 analysis, due to its prominence in Study 1, it was included in the item set for Study 3. In Study 3 this component was represented by the item *Colleague Support and Team Work.* Globally (whole sample), this item was ranked mid-way on the scale, slightly less salient than *Relationship with your Manager* but more so than *Flexible Working Arrangements.* When considered by *age* this component was ranked least salient by the 20-29 year-old cohort and most salient by the 40-49 year-old cohort, followed by the 50+ age cohort ranking it marginally less salient, and the 30-39 year old cohort ranking it just below this. Research suggests that older employees tend to value the social aspects of work more highly than their younger counterparts (Weyman *et al.* 2013) and cite it as a key reason for remaining in employment longer. While findings from the study reported here appear to broadly support this generational difference, they are not wholly linear, in so far as the 50+ year-old cohort did not rank it more salient than their 40-49 year-old counterparts. However, the difference was so modest that it did not seem to indicate any significant divergence from findings reported elsewhere.

By *Sector,* there were no differences at the level of rank order; although, within group differences were apparent in the salience of this item relative to other components. Public sector respondents ranked *Colleague Support and Team Work* more salient than *Staff Development and Training, Flexible Working Arrangements*, *Pay and Benefits* and *Fair Treatment and Equity,* while private sector respondents ranked it more salient than *Relationship with your Manager, Staff Development and Training* and *Fair Treatment and Equity.* Research relating to support is scant but some research does suggest that public sector employees value colleagues more than their private sector counterparts (Zeffane, 1994); although it should be noted that the sample in Zeffane's research was limited to executives, rather than employees across a range of job grades. Other findings include evidence that public sector employees seek a more supportive working environment (Buelens and Van den Broek, 2007). While it has also been suggested that public sector employees are generally more satisfied with their colleagues (Rainey, 1979). However, findings in this area are mixed, with some reporting that public sector bureaucracy puts strain on colleague relationships (Odom *et al.* 1990), while others report no significant difference (Karl and Sutton, 1998).

Socio-Economic Status revealed differences in the salience of *Colleague Support and Team Work*, with salience declining with higher job grade. While the literature is meagre in relation to SES and *Colleague Support and Team Work*, the results of the current study could be interpreted in relation to the Job Demand Control Model (Karasek, 1979) and the later extension to this model, the Job Demand Control Support Model (Johnson and Hall, 1988). The model(s) suggest that where perceived autonomy is low (which may be true in more front line facing roles, where tasks are assigned, or in production line environments), support becomes increasingly important as a mediating factor.

7.3.9.2 Perceived Organisational Support (POS)

Organisational Support was widely articulated in Study 1 in relation to the level of support the organisation offers, particularly when the employee is experiencing difficulty in meeting their job demands. Distrust of management and perceptions of a lack of support by the organisation, as inferred by respondents through increasingly prescriptive rules and procedures were common discussion topics relating to this sub-theme. In some instances, this seemed to sponsor an orientation amongst respondents that they should protect themselves from the organisation, rather than working with it. In the literature, *Perceived Organisational Support (*POS) has been linked with procedural justice (Rhoades *et al.* 2001), which would seem to correspond with the findings of the current study (see Chapter 3: Section 3.4.7.1). Inclusion in decision making and recognition of effort by senior managers has also been found to positively influence POS (Wayne *et al.* 2002), as have discretionary rewards (Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Shore, 1995). *Perceived Organisational Support* has also been associated in the literature with job satisfaction (Eisenberger *et al.* 1997; Shore and Tetric, 1991) and with Leader-Member Exchange (Settoon *et al.* 1996), especially when relationships between employee and supervisor are built on trust and loyalty. This theme was not reflected in the factors that were identified in Study 2, and was not included in Study 3 in view of evidence of the greater primacy/salience of other components.

7.4 Reflections on Method – Threats to Data Quality

7.4.1 Study 1

It is acknowledged that focus group and interview data have the potential to embody a range of dispositional and attribution biases, additionally, the focus on depth of insight and understanding leads to restricted sample size, with the associated potential for the insight gained to be unrepresentative, particularly where participants are volunteers and recruited on an opportunity basis, as in Study 1. Despite, and in recognition of these issues, the adoption of a qualitative approach in the early stages of this study was purposive and is considered a strength in methodological terms, particularly when considered in the context of adopting a combined methods approach. In particular, this element of the study is considered pivotal in realising the objective of achieving a core focus on employee perspectives, i.e. a sharper focus on core components than that afforded by the amassed research findings on QoWL; the latter predominantly being the product of methodologically top-down survey based inquiry. Study 1 provided stand-alone insight, but also provided an ecologically grounded basis for the content and general perspective of the survey instrument developed for Study 2a. This approach brought a degree of methodological triangulation of findings arising from a mixed methods approach. In particular, it provided a degree of validation and elaboration upon Study 1 findings, referenced to a larger, potentially more representative, sample.

Ensuring the right people are in the room is a primary concern in the use of focus group and interview techniques, e.g., members with different job status might be regarded with suspicion by other group members, particularly if they are deemed to sit at a higher level in the organisation than other members. Similarly, discussion can be inhibited if participants sense a 'spy' in their midst and they believe that confidentiality may be threatened. This potential issue was addressed by ensuring that focus group members were of similar job-grade/status in each group. Additionally, it is important to try to take account of selectivity bias, e.g. as might arise if participants were 'selected' by their manager as they may have been selected on the basis of their likelihood to voice certain (desired) opinions, therefore giving an inaccurate view of the organisation as a whole. Similarly, a requirement by an employees' organisation that they participate may engender hostility. To address this issue the researcher asked each organisation to ensure that invited participants were aware that engagement in the discussions was voluntary and this message was further reinforced by the moderator at the start of each focus group or one-to-one discussion, where participants were informed that it was their right to choose not to contribute to the discussion, or to leave at any point should they wish to. None of the participants chose to do this.

Krueger (1988; cited Morgan (Ed.), 1993) also warns of the perils of placing too great an emphasis on reward or compensation for focus group participation, which may attract what market researchers refer to as "focus groupies" – those who enjoy participating in discussion and may not represent the views of the wider organisation. Therefore, Study 1 participants were not offered any reward incentive for participation in the focus groups.

Whilst it must be acknowledged that the current research was limited in the ability of the researcher to place too many specifications on group and one-to-one interview participation as the organisations that engaged did so willingly and gave their time freely, the researcher did request that a proportionally representative sample across the organisation be invited to participate and, in the case of the focus groups, that participants were at broadly the same level in the organisation. In doing this, the potential disbenefits outlined above were ameliorated as far as practicable. Furthermore, whilst it is recognised that one must always strive to keep the data collected as bias free as possible, all such research takes place in the 'real world' and cannot ever be completely 'clean'.

7.4.2 Study 2

A primary concern in terms of data quality for Study 2 was in achieving a sufficient number of valid response sets from which to analyse the data. Participants were recruited through a variety of means – business contacts, social networking sites, blogs, conferences – and although a greater number of respondents would have been desirable in terms of being able to support a more sophisticated multi-variate analysis, the achieved sample (N=442) was sufficient to support formal testing of headline differences, and permitted a degree of testing rarely seen with other QoWL studies.

The decision to use statements designed to elicit scaled responses in agree/disagree format reflected precedents in attitude measurement (Oppenheim, 1992; Spector, 1992) and the Management Standards for work related stress (HSE, 1999) and workplace Safety Climate traditions (HSL, 1999). Critically, in terms of the study objectives, Likert-type scales are well suited to generating data suitable for Factor Analysis, where the objective is to identify a finite number of constructs that characterise respondent perspectives. The Factor Analysis saw the initial 127 items reduced to 45, representing six coherent, nameable components. The output of the Factor Analysis allowed for a degree of triangulation with Study 1, and increased confidence in the initial qualitative findings of the research on a larger, more diverse sample size, thus demonstrating the strength of the mixed methods approach.

7.4.3 Study 3

The Method of Paired Comparison (Thurstone, 1927) was selected as the basis for this final study on the grounds that it offered the potential to, not only establish the rank order of items, but also the relative distance between the items in psychophysical space. A notable strength of paired comparisons is that each item takes the role of both test stimulus and standard for comparison, meaning that the respondent has only to decide which they 'prefer' out of two choices at a time, rather than trying to weigh up their preference for the whole list in one go. As such, the Method of Paired Comparison is a constant-method technique. The addition of the anchor item provided an independent reference point to allow comparisons of the relative (global) salience of QoWL to different demographic groups, i.e. to address the question *'do some social groups place a higher value on QoWL than others?'* (See Ostberg, 1980; also see Bock and Jones, 1968).

With regards sample size (N=234), Study 3 presented similar concerns to Study 2, in terms of gaining sufficient responses to conduct a meaningful analysis. The approach to sampling mirrored that adopted in Study 2. A larger sample size would have increased both the sample power and confidence in the generalisability of the results. A more fundamental issue however, with implications for the interpretation of findings relates to the choice of discriminant criterion. Respondents were asked to make their choices based on their 'ideal job'. The reason for asking respondents to consider the QoWL constructs in relation to their ideal, as opposed to their current job related to the objective of determining the degree of shared perspective and aspiration across individuals. In retrospect, perhaps unsurprisingly, the interpretation of findings would seem strongly suggestive of respondents having used the cognitively more available reference of their current/recent experience of work. However, this conclusion is inferred, it not being possible to determine the extent to which participants referenced their ratings to their 'ideal' or 'actual' job. Ultimately, this ambiguity casts a shadow over the findings from Study 3 and what might be concluded on the basis of this evidence. However, despite this limitation, it is held that the most plausible explanation for the findings in this is that the relative scarcity of highly valued components of QoWL tend to increase their salience to employees.

7.5 Contribution to Knowledge and Practice

Although, as discussed above, no new or previously undiscovered constructs were identified in the findings reported here, there is still considerable scope to enhance understanding and practice in relation to QoWL. The findings of this research are considered to add to established knowledge and contemporary perspectives on QoWL in a number of ways. The research presented here sought to characterise employee perspectives on variables impacting on QoWL and this was achieved through Study 1, which took a qualitative approach to exploring these employee perspectives. The large sample gained, combined with the variety of organisations to participate in Study 1, add credence to the findings. The study achieves a sharper (re)focus on core components of QoWL through the grounded approach to employee perspectives applied. Study 1 findings were then used as the basis for starting to develop a measure of QoWL to further triangulate and characterise the structure of these headline influences on QoWL. As a result, this is the first known combined methods study of QoWL based on a broad and diverse sample. While there have been previous combined methods studies, (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown, 1997), these are few and tend to focus on a single component or a limited sub-set of QoWL components involving demographics with discrete samples, e.g. a single organisation or profession.

The extent to which employee ratings of components impacting on QoWL varies was examined via exploration of demographic breakdowns of the Study 2 data. This represented the first known study to explore such a wide range of demographics across the identified QoWL components, rather than looking at a specific components in relation to a specific demographic (e.g. Baruch, 2000; Green *et al*. 2012; Hill *et al*. 2001; Kim, 2014; Markham *et al*. 2010; Owens, 2006; Somers, 2010). Studies 1 and 2 produced insights that show promise as the basis for the development of a reliable workplace psychometric climate measure that permits profiling of QoWL by job role/function, with the capacity to contribute to organisational learning to inform senior management decision making over intervention and strategy for addressing/enhancing QoWL. A fully developed measure of this type would enable organisations to assess where potential threats to employee QoWL might exist within the organisation, such that they can proactively identify opportunities to improve, in much the same vein as the Safety Climate and Management Standards assessment tools have been used. Approaching QoWL in this way will enable organisations to seek out precursors and remove, manage or mitigate against the effects of them before harm is done to employees and the employing organisation.

Study 3 represents the first known robust systematic study of the relative salience of widely identified core components of QoWL, and the formal testing of differences in profile for different groups of employees. This study further demonstrated that the QoWL components identified in this research (and by implication in other research where these have been identified) are meaningful to employees, to the extent that they can make reliable discriminant judgements of their importance in determining perceived QoWL. The insight into the extent to which individuals share a common/discreet perspective on the relative salience of variables impacting on QoWL and, the extent to which (headline) social group membership (and by inference elements of shared experience) appears to impact on this, provides valuable insight into the degree to which interventions might enhance QoWL in an organisational setting. Knowing how far reaching interventions might be (i.e. the likelihood that a high proportion of the employees in a given organisation being positively influenced) can offer decision makers the clarity to decide which aspects of QoWL to target for maximum effect. The emergence of *Work-life Balance* and *Job Satisfaction* as the most salient aspects of QoWL across all demographic groupings in Study 3 presents an important contribution in sign-posting organisations as to which aspects of QoWL they should address as a priority. Intuitively, poor *Work-Life Balance* will result in employees having to take more time off work to address issues outside of work, and may also result in employees seeking alternative employment as the strive to gain greater balance.

A key insight from the research is that employee perspectives appear to be dominated by aspects of QoWL that are judged to be absent, under-addressed or otherwise sub-optimal, rather than the presence/enhancement of valued components engendering halo effects. While this provides useful insight for organisations as to what to enhance to improve employee experiences of QoWL, it might also indicate that investing in QoWL (whilst bringing business benefits in relation to reduced sickness absence, lower turnover, enhanced performance and quality), is perhaps not best cast as the route to increased employee happiness, but essentially defined by its opposite; the means to avoid/counter unhappiness and its negative correlates.

The cross-over between working life and home life demonstrated in the research reported here, particularly in relation to the components of *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance*, raises questions over whether QoWL should be approached as a finite concept, or if it is so inextricably linked with other aspects of Quality of Life (QoL) more generally, that the two should not be separated. However, the impetus for this research was to (re)focus on those aspects of QoWL most salient to employees with the aim of enabling organisations to gain a clearer perspective on which aspects would have the greatest impact on QoWL. While greater insight and potential

benefits may be achieved through a more holistic approach to QoWL and QoL, there is the question of the degree to which organisations should 'interfere' in the non-working lives of their employees. Furthermore, any tool that seeks to enhance employee QoWL (and potentially, by extension, their QoL) needs to offer solutions that the organisation can realistically influence, and while they might *advise* employees on enhancing aspects of their non-working lives, they cannot directly influence them. It might be that, conceptually, QoWL should be considered a facet of QoL and that any measure seeking to understand how to enhance QoL include measures of QoWL to gain a more complete picture.

Overall, the research findings here are submitted as an empirically grounded, manageable set of core QoWL constructs that organisations can focus on when seeking to enhance employee QoWL. The psychophysical scale of salience of constructs offers further guidance to organisations in how best to prioritise interventions to target those aspects of QoWL likely to have the greatest positive impact on employees and, by extension, the organisation.

7.6 Recommendations for Future Research and Practical Application

7.6.1 An attrition model of QOWL

Taken as a whole, the findings appeared to indicate that QoWL was in many respects defined more by decrements rather than features, which might be predicted to lead to its enhancement. What presents as an attrition model of headline impacts on QoWL would benefit from further exploration, elaboration and testing.

7.6.2 Development of a QoWL Climate Tool

The research reported here, whilst offering a (re)focussing of core constructs, is considered to represent the 'tip of the iceberg' in relation to the broad and complex nature of QoWL. As such, there are an infinite number of ways in which this research could be expanded upon. Principally however, development of a QoWL Climate Tool, potentially building on the proto-scales used in Study 2b would offer intuitive appeal in terms of a logical next step. It would be desirable to conduct a replication of Study 2, using a Confirmatory factor analysis to test the stability of the factor structure. Similarly, any set of construct scales based on these findings would need to be subjected to a full development process, in particular with respect to demonstrating the stability of responses over time, i.e. re-test reliability and the discriminant capacity of the scales (see Costello and Osbourne, 2005; Spector, 1992). In light of this, in order to develop the tool further, it could be administered to a new set of respondents and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

conducted to compare the emergent factor structure with the Study 2a findings. This would assess the reliability of the tool and increase confidence in its efficacy.

Once the factor structure has been confirmed, the item set could likely be reduced to a more manageable number of items; selected on the basis of the factor loadings and relevance to the QoWL component. This reduced item set could then be administered to a group of participants twice, over a period of a few weeks, followed up with a T-test to compare both sets of results to establish test-re test reliability of the tool.

7.6.3 Practical Application of the QoWL Climate Tool and Development of Interventions

Once developed, the QoWL Climate Tool could then be applied in work organisations in a functionally equivalent manner to contemporary workplace health and safety assessment climate tools, i.e. the results of the QoWL Climate Tool could be used to contribute to organisational learning over identifying weaknesses and designing interventions to more effectively manage salient influences. This would enable organisations to design interventions based on data derived from their own workforce (including different segments) to address the root causes challenges to QoWL, with subsequent periodic use of the tool providing the capacity to monitor impacts and change over time. This approach essentially represents a DMAIC (Define-Measure-Analyse-Improve-Control) methodology, familiar to many organisations when dealing with other topics, e.g. Six Sigma (Pande *et al.* 2002; HSE Climate tool; Stress management standards etc.). The key strength here being that the method will likely be familiar to most organisations, and presents a structured method by which interventions can be applied and tracked.

7.6.4 Further Exploration of Differences by Age and Socio-Economic Status

Exploration of demographic differences represents a further area for potential future research. The research reported here explored differences by age, gender and SES, but the sample sizes were modest, thus limiting the degree to which data could be interrogated. Applying the developed QoWL Climate Tool on a larger stratified sample would allow for a more extensive exploration of potential (dis)parity across groups, in particular, differences by employment sector. Greater exploration of demographic differences might also allow for a QoWL measure to be developed so that specific components can be selected by the organisation for inclusion, on the basis of the profile of the organisation by function/job role, for example, questions relating to flexible working practices might be selected for exclusion in organisations/departments where the job role is such that flexibility is not possible (on a production line, for instance). By

following up the measure with focus groups to explore some of the findings, a greater understanding of why different demographic groups might have different perceptions relating to the relative salience of aspects of QoWL could be gained. This understanding might help to provide further insight and guidance to organisations seeking to enhance the QoWL of their employees. Greater understanding of demographic differences would seem to be particularly important in relation to age, in light of the differences by age group evident in the current research and the recent changes to UK retirement age (https://www.gov.uk/retirement-age).

7.7 Conclusions

- Findings from Study's 1 and 2 facilitated the identification and articulation of aspects of QoWL of high relevance to employees. The degree of homogeneity across participants from a broad array of job roles and professions would seem to indicate that there is a notable degree of shared perspective over core components of QoWL.

- Findings from Study 3 indicate that while there is consensus over headline variables, there are also differences between different groups of employees with regard to the relative salience of core components.

- Six constructs are considered to characterise core elements of employee perspectives on variables contributing to QoWL: *Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment; Leader-Member Exchange; Development, Investment and Training; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction; Work-Life Balance*. These components accounted for a relativity large proportion (58.4%) of the total variance.

- *Job Satisfaction* and *Work-Life Balance* were consistently ranked the most salient components across all demographic groupings in the Paired Comparison study. This would indicate that these aspects will likely have the greatest impact on employee QoWL if addressed by organisations.

- The identified constructs were found to be salient and meaningful to employees (as evidenced by the capacity to make reliable distinctions between them) and were interpretable with reference to established research findings.

- The foundation work on measure development to characterise employee perceptions of QoWL has the potential to profile employee perspectives, benchmark organisational performance and thereby contribute to organisational learning to inform corporate

decision making over intervention to address QoWL, in the Management Standards tradition.

- Evidence of differences by age, gender and SES were detected in the ratings of *Flexibility* and *Work-Life Balance*. This might be interpreted as indicative of important (perceived or actual) social inequality in QoWL.

- Overall the findings, particularly for studies 1 and 3, appear to indicate that employee perspectives on QoWL are to some degree defined by the paucity/absence of highly valued components rather than being enhanced by the presence/enhancement of these components. However, it is possible that what is 'absent' is simply more cognitively available than what it 'present'.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Study 1 - Ethics Approval Information

ATTACHMENT TO THE ETHICAL APPROVAL FORM

NAME OF PHD STUDENT:

Katherine Blackford

NAMES OF SUPERVISORS:

Dr Andrew Weyman

University of Bath

Dr Elizabeth Hellier

University of Plymouth

TITLE OF PROJECT:

Building a business case for Quality of Working Life (QoWL)

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND RATIONALE

The main aim of this M.Phil/PhD is to review existing research into Quality of Working Life (QoWL) and develop tools, techniques and interventions aimed at improving QoWL. This research will also be used to explore the possible business case for QoWL.

The purpose of phase 1 of the research is to identify the key themes that have an impact on employee QoWL. The information collected in the course of the focus groups and interviews will be compared and contrasted with the findings of published research. The information gathered at this initial exploratory phase will be used as firm grounding for the development of later stages of the research.

Previous reviews of the literature (Kahn 1992, Nadler & Lawler 1983) have suggested that key themes influencing QoWL are:

1) Task variety and finding tasks challenging but not impossible.
2) Having control over how, when and at what pace work is completed and the sense of autonomy that comes with that.
3) Having the resources required to complete the task.
4) Good relationships with co-workers.
5) Reasonable wages and opportunity for promotion.
6) Conditions of work – generally thought to encompass the physical working conditions like condition of equipment and safety provision.
7) Engagement of work force in problem solving.
8) Reward systems.

However, research to date has failed to provide a clear business case for QoWL leaving businesses unsure of if, how and what they should do to address the quality of their employees' working lives. This research seeks to fill this gap by exploring what contributes to QoWL, the relative importance of different factors and any homogeneity that exists.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF METHODS

Research aim

The aim of the study is to develop tools and techniques that allow companies to understand where possible QoWL issues in their business might arise, and signpost them towards which interventions are best suited to addressing the issues identified.

Objectives

1. To carry out a comprehensive review of the literature.
2. Phase 1 - Conduct freely associative qualitative focus groups and interviews to explore the differences between employer and employee perspectives of QoWL and identify key areas for further study.
3. Phase 2 – The information gathered in Phase 1 of the research will be used to inform structured focus groups and interviews to explore possible themes in greater depth and provide grounding for later stages of the research.
4. Phase 3 - Using the information gathered in Phase 2 develop a psychometric tool to assess levels of QoWL within businesses and refine the survey such that it may be used as a business tool linked to Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and absence statistics.
5. Phase 4 - 'Real World' trials

6. Phase 5 – Use all of the information gathered to date to develop a behavioural measure for proactive measurement of QoWL and recommended interventions.

PARTICIPANTS

It is planned that 4 to 5 organisations from both private and public sector will participate in the research. Each interview and focus group will typically be of 45-60 minutes duration. We are seeking to interview 2-4 senior managers and to conduct 1 - 3 focus groups (each of 4-8 employees) in each participating organisation, at their normal place of work. Participants will be invited to participate in the focus group or interview by the researcher to ensure anonymity. Permission to recruit in this manner will be sought by the researcher prior to commencement of the focus groups or interview in each organisation. The sample will be an opportunity sample of those individuals willing to participate and available at the allotted time.

Data collection and analysis

The invitation to take part in the focus group or interviews will be extended by the researcher. The invitation will include the following information:

1. The purpose of the study
2. A statement to confirm that participation in the study is voluntary and consent can be withdrawn at any point without the requirement for any explanation.
3. Confirmation to participants that to preserve confidentiality, all responses will be anonymised and will not be revealed to their employer or any other party in a form allowing for identification of individuals.
4. A report of findings will be produced and passed to the company to disseminate as they see fit.

Additionally, a statement mirroring the invitation will be read at the start of each focus group or interview and consent will be sought. Participants will be asked to give written consent (by signing up to the consent form). Participants will be assured by the researcher that any written consent will not be shared with the organization or any third party.

PLANED START DATE AND DURATION

1st October 2010 – 30th November 2010

Appendix B

Study 1 - Sample Characteristics

Mining Company	
Focus Group	Managers
Focus Group	Administrators
Focus Group	Miners
Focus Group	Senior Managers
Focus Group	Miners
Focus Group	Dock Workers
Focus Group	Technicians/Engineers
Focus Group	Miners
Focus Group	Miners
Focus Group	Miners
Focus Group	Miners
Focus Group	Miners
One to one Interview	Miner
One to one Interview	Manager
Fire and Rescue Service	
Focus Group	Support staff
Focus Group	Support staff
Focus Group	Fire fighters
One to one Interview	Support staff
Recruitment Consultancy	
Focus Group	Trainee Consultants
Focus Group	Consultants
Focus Group	Consultants
Focus Group	Senior Consultants
Focus Group	Managers and Principal Consultants
Focus Group	Support staff
Focus Group	Support staff
Focus Group	Consultants
Focus Group	Consultants and Resourcers
Focus Group	Resourcers
Focus Group	Senior Consultants
Focus Group	Managers and Principal Consultants
One to one Interview	Managing Director
Ambulance Service	
Focus Group	Technicians
Focus Group	Patient Transport
One to one Interview	Emergency Care Assistant
One to one Interview	Paramedic
One to one Interview	Paramedic
Mixed Group	

Focus Group	Company Director
	Consultant
	Teacher
	Teacher

Appendix C

Study 1 – Interview Consent Form

May 2011
Study 1

Consent Form
Quality of Working Life – What does it mean to you?

Researcher: Kate Blackford

Please ensure you have carefully read the Participant Information Sheet. Once you have done this AND IF you have decided that you would like to take part in the above study, please tick the boxes below:

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. ☐
2. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have had any and all questions answered satisfactorily. ☐
3. I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. ☐
4. I give permission for any information I give to be securely stored at the University of Bath for 5 years after the study is completed. ☐
5. I agree to the study report quoting my verbal or written comments directly, as long as any quotations used are made anonymous. ☐
6. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix D

Study 1 – Interview Protocol

Quality of working life – What does it mean to you?

Instruction to researcher:

Introduce yourself and follow with something along the lines of " Thank you for coming along to talk to me today, I am here to ask you for your thoughts on quality of working life (QoWL) and what it means to you. In a moment I will read out some more detailed information about the study and what the research is looking at, but first I would like to assure you that there are no right or wrong answers in what we are going to discuss today, I am interested only in hearing your thoughts on what influences quality of working life. Don't worry if you feel as though your comments are vague, I would still like to hear them. I will now read through the information sheet…"

Read through Participant Information sheet and ask participants to sign up to say they have understood the information relating to the study.

Conducting the focus group:

Firstly I would like to go around the room and hear from you what your job role/job title is.

Thank you. Now I'd like to hear a little bit about what it is like to work here.

Prompts: What is your job like?

How well do you get on with the people you work with?

Are there good relations between employees and the company/senior managers?

Is there strong team spirit?

Do you think most people here are happy with their job?

Now I'd like you to write down three things that you like about working here.

(Allow time for them all to do this)

Explore the more prominent answers and open up to a group discussion.

And could you please write down three things you don't like about working here.

(Again, allow a little time for participants to complete this. Once everyone has done this, ask some members of the group to share their positives and record on a flip chart. Then follow with the negatives and record these responses too)

Explore the more prominent answers and open up to a group discussion.

Hand out worksheet 1.0

Now I would like you to individually rate the items on the sheet I have just handed out.

Thinking about your job, on a scale of 1-5 (1 = very negative, 2 = quite negative, 3 = neither negative or positive, 4 = quite positive, 5 = very positive, 6 = Not applicable/don't know) how would you rate;

The physical environment you work in	1	2	3	4	5	6
The social environment	1	2	3	4	5	6
The actual work your job involves	1	2	3	4	5	6
The way the people who work here are treated by the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6
The amount of interest the organisation takes in employee well-being	1	2	3	4	5	6
How much you trust the organisation to support you	1	2	3	4	5	6
The impact your work has on your life outside of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
The effect I feel my work has on my general well-being is in the most part…	1	2	3	4	5	6
The behaviour I am subjected to at work is mostly…	1	2	3	4	5	6

Use the answers as a basis for group discussion, note on a flip chart.

Why do you think people stay in this organisation?

Why do you think people leave this organisation?

What do you understand by the term quality of working life? What do you think are the biggest influences on happiness for the people who work here?

Prompts: Relationship with line manager

Control over how you do your job

Flexibility of work location/time

Pension and other terms and conditions of employment – no. holiday days per annum?

The people you work with

The culture of the organisation

What would you change about your job and why?

Prompts: Your manager

Relationships/interactions with others within or external to the organisation

Pace of work

Hours and flexibility of work

Control over the tasks you do and when you do them

How would you describe your employer?

Prompts: Caring/uncaring

Values staff/does not value staff

How does this organisation compare with previous organisations you have worked in?

Explore in group discussion.

Instruction to researcher:

Thank participants for their time and comments and close the session.

Appendix E

Study 1 Qualitative Analysis – theme occurrence table by focus group / one-to-one interview

Grp No *	Theme																
	R1	**R2**	**R3**	**R4**	**T1**	**T5**	**J1**	**J2**	**J3**	**J4**	**S1**	**C2**	**C3**	**I2**	**Or1**	**Tot**	**%**
G1	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X			***9***	***60***
G2	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X		X	***11***	***73***
G3	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	***13***	***87***
G4		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X	***10***	***67***
G5		X		X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	***10***	***67***
G6		X			X		X	X		X	X	X		X		***8***	***53***
G7		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X	***10***	***67***
G8		X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	***11***	***73***
G9		X		X			X	X			X	X	X	X	X	***9***	***60***
G10	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			X	***11***	***73***
G11		X		X			X	X	X		X	X		X	X	***9***	***60***
G12	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			***11***	***73***
I13		X			X	X	X	X	X		X				X	***8***	***53***
I14		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	***11***	***73***
G15	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	***14***	***93***
G16	X		X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	***11***	***73***
G17	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	***14***	***93***
G18	X		X				X				X	X		X	X	***7***	***47***
G19		X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	***10***	***67***
G20	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X				***9***	***60***
G21		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X					***8***	***53***
G22	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	***10***	***67***
G23	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	***11***	***73***
G24	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X				X	***9***	***60***
G25	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X			***11***	***73***
G26	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X	X	***11***	***73***
I27	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X			X	X	***10***	***67***
G28	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	***12***	***80***
G2	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X			***10***	***67***

9																	
I30	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X	***12***	***80***
I31	X	X			X		X	X			X				X	***7***	***47***
G32	X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	***11***	***73***
I33	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	***11***	***73***
I34	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	***12***	***80***
I35	X					X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	***9***	***60***
G36	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	***14***	***93***
Tot	***25***	***30***	***19***	***23***	***24***	***14***	***36***	***32***	***23***	***21***	***35***	***27***	***18***	***18***	***29***		
%	***69***	***83***	***53***	***64***	***67***	***39***	***100***	***89***	***64***	***58***	***97***	***75***	***50***	***50***	***81***		

Appendix F

Study 2 – Psychometric Survey

University of Bath Quality of Working Life Survey

Welcome to the Quality of Working Life Survey

Thank you for taking part in the following survey. The University of Bath is undertaking research into quality of working life. In this survey we are interested in your views on things that have an impact on the quality of your working life. The results from this confidential survey will contribute to wider research activity in the area of work and employee well-being.

Before you complete the survey, please read the following:
1. You are a volunteer and do not have to complete the survey.
2. If you decide at any point that you no longer want to continue with the survey you can simply shut down the browser and your answers will not be submitted. Answers will only be submitted once you finish the entire survey.
3. Your responses are confidential - there is no way that your answers can be traced back to you and you do not need to enter your name at any point during the survey.
4. All responses are optional, but it would be helpful if you try to respond to all statements.

The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete and you can save your responses and return to them later if you wish to.
Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Data Protection

All data collected in this survey will be held anonymously and securely.
Cookies, personal data stored by your Web browser, are not used in this survey.

About You

The following questions tell me a little bit about you and where you work. This is to allow me to group the responses by different job types etc…

1. Is your job

☐ Full time ☐ Part time

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)

☐

2a. What Industry do you work in? (e.g. Construction, IT, Mining, Public Sector)

☐

2b. Which of the following best describes the organisation your work for? (please select one only)

☐ A Local Authority/Local Council

☐ The Civil Service/Gov't Dept/Agency

☐ The NHS/Health Trust/Health Authority

☐ A public school or non-E college (such as FE)

☐ A Higher Education establishment

☐ The Police

☐ The Armed Forces

☐ Another type of public sector organisation

☐ The private sector

2c. Do you work face to face with the public on a regular basis?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2d. Approximately how many people would you say work for your organisation?

☐ Fewer than 50 people

☐ 51-250 people

☐ More than 250 people

3. Are you a:

☐ Permanent employee ☐ Temporary employee

4. How long have you been in your current/most recent employment?

☐ Less than 12 months

☐ 1-5 years

☐ More than 5 years

5. How many hours did you work in your last full working week?

☐ hours

6. What is your usual shift pattern?

☐ Days

☐ Nights

☐ Rotating shifts

7. At broadly what level do you work in the organisation?

- ☐ Senior Management/Director
- ☐ Middle Management
- ☐ Supervisor/Team Leader
- ☐ Front Line Employee

8. Approximately how many days have you taken off work sick in the last 12 months?

☐ days

9. Approximately how many of the days you have taken off work sick do you think were either caused by work or made worse by work?

☐ days

10. Your age:

☐ years

11. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender

University of Bath Quality of Working Life Survey

Please select how much you agree/disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My superior/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake					
The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me					
If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation					
Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week					
When I finish work for the day I am too tired to do anything else					
I am confident that I have enough time to do my job to the best of my ability					
I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work					
Members of my team are willing to go the extra mile to meet my supervisor/manager's work goals					
My manager always has a return to work meeting with me after I have been off sick to ensure that I am fit to be back at work					
I have no intention of leaving my current employer					
Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job					
I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers					
I often go into work when I am ill and know I should really stay at home					
I sometimes feel that there is little team support in my department					
My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential					
Some people get recognised more than others in this organisation					
We can trust our supervisor/manager					

Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction					
For me work is just about earning enough money to do what I want to do in the time when I am not at work					
The company encourages me to develop new skills					
I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs					
When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it					
I have achievable deadlines					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It's up to me if I want to work overtime/longer hours					
My job adds no value to others					
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation					
I trust my colleagues					
People in my team respect my supervisor/manager					
I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work					
There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation					
My supervisor/manager expects me to work more than 40 hours per week					
I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation					
Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort					
I can work flexi time when I choose					
I understand what is expected of me at work					
My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills					
I get a sense of achievement from doing my job					
If I was really unhappy at work I would leave my job without necessarily having another one to go to					
My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment					
My supervisor/manager is key to the performance of my team					
My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right					
There is a friendly working atmosphere within the organisation					
The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs					
I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation					

I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair					
My work is the most important thing in my life					
I am confident I could continue working at my current pace until retirement					
Changes at work are often made without staff having a say in them					
My supervisor/manager treats people fairly					
I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life					
I would leave my current job if another offer was made to me even if it was no necessarily a better job					
My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job					
I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me					
My organisation would do everything possible to help me return to work if I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks					
I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments					
The organisation does not invest in its staff					
When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager					
I often feel that I am not treated fairly compared with my colleagues					
I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home					
If I take time off I work about letting others down					
If I under-perform at work my supervisor/manager is quick to point it out					
There are no real career opportunities in this organisation					
The company does not seem to reward hard work					
I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done					
I can plan my working day					
My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it					
I believe that my job is valuable to people both within and external to the organisation I work in					
My supervisor/manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work					
A significant number of people don't pull their weight in					

this organisation					
It is not easy to get time off to run personal errands					
This organisation offers a fair days work for a fair days pay					
People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation					
My supervisor/manager is consistent in his/her approach to dealing with staff					
This organisation promotes staff who work hard					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My supervisor/manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place					
I feel able to voice my opinions and influence change in my area of work					
There is good team spirit in my area of work					
My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work					
My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job					
I am happy in my current job					
I have confidence in the way the organisation is run					
My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team					
I feel I often have to work faster than I would like in order to get all my work done					
The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work					
Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation					
My supervisor/manager treats people fairly					
I am not interested in being promoted to a higher grade					
Am given good feedback on the work I do					
I have very little control over the amount of work I have to do each day					
There are enough staff that I can take annual leave when I choose to					
My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does					
The good team spirit in my department improves my quality of working life					
This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile					
I have very little control over the speed at which I work					
If I under-perform at work my supervisor/manager will					

make an example of me in front of the people I work with					
Staff are always consulted about change at work					
I worry that if something goes wrong at work I will be blamed for it					
I have other job options open to me, but choose not to take them at this time					
Often I can't sleep at night because I am thinking about work					
I would only leave my current job if a better offer came up					
I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees					
I feel able to openly express my opinions about work when I'm at work					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There are good career progression opportunities open to me					
No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation					
I would like to work less hours					
The friendly working environment in my department makes me want to come to work					
My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team					
I am worried that if I take time off sick I might lose my job					
I trust my line manager to keep confidences					
I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned					
I have a lot of choice over how I organise my working day					
I feel under pressure to work long hours					
Some people get away with a lot in this organisation					
I have regular meetings with me supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression					
The organisation treats its staff fairly					
There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work					
I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation					
I feel under pressure to go to work even when I am ill					
I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates					
I often work more than 40 hours per week					
There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation					
I have clear goals that enable me to do my job effectively					
I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work					
If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised					

If I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks) I feel confident that my organisation would support me					
I am confident the organisation will support me in difficult times					

Survey Completed

Your questionnaire has now been automatically submitted. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your views are valued and will be a great help to me in my research.

If you would like to know more about the research I am undertaking please email me at klb31@bath.ac.uk.

Appendix G

Study 2 - Ethics Approval Information

Quality of Working Life – Defining Influences, Cultural Change and Business Benefits

Purpose of Project and Rationale

QoWL has been the subject of much past enquiry generating an extensive number of potential influencing variables at the individual and organisational levels. However, as highlighted in Dame Carol Black's review *'Working for a Healthier Tomorrow'* (2008) many businesses still fail to see the benefits of investing in the QoWL of their employees. The breadth and complexity of variables identified in research into this issue, combined with limited steer on good practice from the State, employers' bodies and human resources associations is widely held to contribute to inertia in this area. The central purpose of the current thesis is to devise a sharper focus on key contributory variables and the scope for employer action.

A grounded approach was adopted for study 1 in order to cut through the morass of at times conflicting research evidence by focusing on employee accounts. To date, the research activity e.g. Hackman and Oldham (1975), Efraty and Sirgy (1990), Lau (2000) has been methodologically 'top down' exploratory and correlation, based on managerial and academic intuitions and theoretical models over what is important to employees. As such, these studies presume to know what the right questions are to ask, with limited ecological grounding rooted in the views of employees. Many studies have also been focused on single businesses or single sectors e.g. Graen et al, 1977, DeJoy et al, 2010 which may raise questions over the generalisability of findings. The current research seeks to address these limitations.

A central hypothesis is that there will be a set of factors that enhance or erode QoWL. The methodology selected is aimed at identifying what these factors might be and the extent to which they can be considered universal.

The organisations engaged in Study 1 were an Ambulance Service, a fire and rescue service, a recruitment consultancy, a mining company and a mixed group including teachers, consultants and an entrepreneur. The range of job roles of those involved was also varied, including administrators, managers, team leaders, senior managers, miners, dock workers, trainees

consultants, consultants and senior consultants, paramedics, fire fighters, support workers, technicians and directors.

This second study builds on the key themes identified in study 1 with the aim of exploring and refining these insights with a large sample of respondents, and an element of confirmation of findings from Study 1.

Objectives:

1. To develop a self-complete questionnaire to address the aim stated above

2. To develop questionnaire items that map onto the themes identified in study 1

3. To quantitatively explore the factors that enhance or erode QoWL

Generation of Questionnaire Items

It is planned that questionnaire items will be designed on the basis of the interpretation of findings from study 1, informed by established theoretical and empirical insights form the literature.

Initially a large battery of statements will be developed and a small number of respondents will be asked to complete a cognitive pilot by rating their level of agreement with items on a Likert style scale (five response options ranging from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree') and giving feedback to the researcher on issues of clarity and sense making of the statements. Once this has been done the questionnaire -

Items will be reviewed and refined and a quantitative pilot conducted. The final questionnaire will be distributed and a Principal Components Analysis will be executed on the responses to identify items that cluster together. The results will be compared with the findings of Study 1 to establish the fit between emergent factors and the themes as identified in Study 1.

Method

It is intended that the questionnaires will be distributed and completed online using an online survey generation tool, e.g. survey monkey that will enable results to be exported into an Excel spreadsheet and then on into SPSS for analysis.

The Sample

It is hoped that those organisations involved in study 1 will participate in study 2. The first study benefited from a range of organisations different in character (see Sample characteristics table above) and size and also from public and private sector domains and it is hoped that the same breadth of sample will be achieved in this second study.

In order to maximise the likelihood of obtaining the required number of responses to ensure statistically significant results the researcher will put together a communication for each organisation requesting volunteers to participate to raise awareness of the survey and its purpose. All participants will be volunteers recruited through an email sent out by the researcher following the successful negotiation of access to staff email addresses with each organisation. The email to potential participants will stress that their participation is voluntary; also detail how the results will be kept confidential and the level of feedback that will be given to their organisation whilst maintaining respondent confidentiality, i.e. the organisation will only receive summary results which preclude the indemnification of any individuals. This will also be reiterated in the survey instructions respondents will see when they first enter the online survey. Other organisations, identified through the researchers wider network of and new contacts made in the course of research so far, will also be invited to participate in the study. These organisations include John Lewis Partnership, Thales Group, UK Coal, and West Berkshire Council.

All respondents will be over 18 years old. A minimum realised sample of 500 will be aimed for so that the data collected can be interrogated via a range of demographic criteria e.g. age group, gender, job grade, length of service and employment sector.

Consent

All respondents will be volunteers. All participant organisations will be informed that participation by their employees is both voluntary and confidential. Consent will be given by respondents choosing to complete the survey once they have read the introductory brief informing them that participation is voluntary, responses confidential and they have the right to withdraw at any time.

Participants will be informed of the purpose of the study prior to commencing the survey and thanked for their responses at the end of the survey.

Ethical considerations

Due to the fact that participants will be fully informed of the nature of the study prior to participation as well as the fact that participation is completely voluntary means that ethical considerations are modest. Furthermore, the nature of the study is unlikely to cause psychological distress to participants added to which, participants will be fully informed of their right to withdraw, without giving any reason, from the study at any time should they no longer wish to proceed. Taking this into account, the key ethical considerations will be; (i) ensuring participant anonymity which will be done through administering the survey online. Also, there is no need for participants to give their name which will further increase their sense of anonymity; (ii) ensuring participants are engaging with the study as volunteers, which will be done by giving the participant direct access to the survey through a link so this is not in any way managed by the organisation, but purely by the researcher; (iii) a global email will be sent to all participating organisations after the survey has been completed with some feedback and the key findings; (iv) providing researcher contact details at the end of the survey so that if participants would like further feedback on survey results they can contact the researcher at a later date and totally independent of their survey responses to get this.

Estimated start and duration of project

Estimated start date for the cognitive pilot is 11th February 2012. The pilot is expected to commence one week later and the actual survey expected to be ready for release by 27th February 2012. The survey will be live for four to six weeks putting the study estimated end date at 30th March 2012.

Appendix H

Study 2a - Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
12a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake	428	1	5	1.81	.816	.666	1.093	.118	1.470	.235
12b_NFR- The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	429	1	5	2.85	1.091	1.191	.164	.118	-.853	.235
12c_PO- If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation	429	1	5	3.10	1.102	1.215	-.026	.118	-.754	.235
12f_JD-TP-I am confident that I have enough time to do my job to the best of my ability	429	1	5	2.63	1.140	1.299	.496	.118	-.780	.235
12h_JD-EXPECT-Members of my team are willing to go the extra mile to meet my supervisor/manager's work goals	429	1	5	2.17	.838	.702	.772	.118	.826	.235

12i_C-LME-My manager always has a return to work meeting with me after I have been off sick to ensure I am fit to be back at work	429	1	5	3.17	1.096	1.201	-.126	.118	-.395	.235
12j_OTHER-I have no intention of leaving my current employer	429	1	5	2.56	1.228	1.509	.447	.118	-.740	.235
13a_C-LME-Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job	429	1	5	2.15	.913	.833	.775	.118	.178	.235
13b_R-IIS-I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers	429	1	5	2.68	1.114	1.240	.344	.118	-.726	.235
13e_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential	429	1	5	2.40	.908	.824	.754	.118	.444	.235
13gC-LME-We can trust our supervisor/manager	429	1	5	2.28	.942	.887	.776	.118	.539	.235
13h_IJS- Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction	429	1	5	1.84	.846	.716	.930	.118	.646	.235
13i_CAMERAD -I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work	429	1	5	3.56	1.150	1.322	-.492	.118	-.724	.235
13j_R-IIS The company encourages me to develop new skills	429	1	5	2.67	1.027	1.055	.313	.118	-.462	.235

14a_R-IIS I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs	429	1	5	3.20	1.163	1.354	-.186	.118	-1.000	.235
14b_R-NF- When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it	429	1	5	3.16	1.104	1.219	-.186	.118	-.834	.235
14c_JD-TP I have achievable deadlines	429	1	5	2.67	.978	.956	.513	.118	-.454	.235
14d_JD-E It's up to me if I want to work overtime/longer hours	429	1	5	2.42	1.047	1.095	.792	.118	-.023	.235
14f_OTHER I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation	429	1	5	2.22	.929	.863	.587	.118	-.048	.235
14g_CAMARAD -I trust my colleagues	429	1	5	2.17	.785	.617	.816	.118	1.033	.235
14h_C-LME People in my team respect my supervisor/manager	429	1	5	2.34	.956	.913	.779	.118	.242	.235
14i_JD-FC I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work	429	1	5	2.13	1.072	1.148	1.164	.118	.801	.235
14j_R-IIS There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation	429	1	5	2.87	1.104	1.218	.160	.118	-.731	.235
15b_R-PO I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation	429	1	5	3.07	1.098	1.205	-.001	.118	-.772	.235
15d_JD-FC I can work flexi time when I choose	429	1	5	2.68	1.228	1.508	.420	.118	-.881	.235

15e_JD-E I understand what is expected of me at work	429	1	5	1.97	.764	.583	1.059	.118	2.043	.235
15f_R-IIS My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills	429	1	5	2.58	.984	.969	.364	.118	-.425	.235
15g_IJS- I get a sense of achievement from doing my job	429	1	5	2.04	.865	.748	.851	.118	.636	.235
15i_JD-FC My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment	429	1	5	1.77	.816	.666	1.344	.118	2.406	.235
15j_C-LME-My supervisor/manager is key to the performance of my team	429	1	5	2.74	1.035	1.071	.153	.118	-.757	.235
16a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right	429	1	5	1.97	.798	.637	.922	.118	1.322	.235
16b_CAMARAD-There is a friendly working atmosphere within the organisation	429	1	5	2.07	.816	.665	.801	.118	.750	.235
16c_POS- The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs	429	1	5	2.77	1.153	1.330	.266	.118	-.838	.235
16e_TFE-FOO I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair	429	1	5	2.69	1.030	1.061	.474	.118	-.501	.235
16f_OTHER-My work is the most important thing in my life	429	1	5	3.97	.887	.786	-.780	.118	.253	.235

16g_JD-TP I am confident I could continue working at my current pace until retirement	429	1	5	3.04	1.257	1.580	.046	.118	-1.149	.235
16i_TFE=PSC My supervisor/manager treats people fairly	429	1	5	2.24	.938	.879	.837	.118	.544	.235
17a_POS-The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life	429	1	5	2.76	1.009	1.018	.271	.118	-.407	.235
17c_C-IES-My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job	429	1	5	2.34	.916	.839	.859	.118	.496	.235
17e_POS- My organisation would do everything possible to help me return to work if I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks)	429	1	5	2.30	.892	.796	.716	.118	.295	.235
17f_JD-FC I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments	429	1	5	2.63	1.191	1.419	.496	.118	-.754	.235
17h_R- NF When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager	429	1	5	2.41	.949	.901	.670	.118	-.050	.235
18f_JD-FC I can plan my working day	429	1	5	2.49	1.076	1.157	.814	.118	-.114	.235
18g_JD-TP My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it	429	1	5	2.31	.927	.859	.920	.118	.707	.235

18h_IJS- I believe that my job is valuable to people both within and external to the organisation I work in	429	1	5	2.07	.868	.754	1.043	.118	1.590	.235
18i_JD-E- My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work	429	1	5	2.31	.896	.803	1.071	.118	1.090	.235
19b_POS- This organisation offers a fair days work for a fair days pay	429	1	5	2.48	.956	.914	.731	.118	.096	.235
19c_TFE-FOP - People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation	429	1	5	3.00	1.094	1.196	.163	.118	-.944	.235
19d_TFE-PSC My manager is consistent in his approach to dealing with staff	429	1	5	2.49	1.038	1.078	.708	.118	-.159	.235
19e_R-PO This organisation promotes staff who work hard	429	1	5	3.10	1.035	1.071	-.097	.118	-.773	.235
19f_R-PO My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place	429	1	5	3.30	1.132	1.281	-.368	.118	-.740	.235
19g_C-IEC I feel able to voice my opinions and influence change in my area of work	429	1	5	2.51	1.067	1.138	.669	.118	-.285	.235
19i_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work	429	1	5	2.37	.927	.859	.743	.118	.211	.235

19j_C-LME- My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job	429	1	5	2.34	.922	.850	.832	.118	.537	.235
20a_OTHER- I am happy in my current job	429	1	5	2.45	1.048	1.099	.696	.118	-.072	.235
20b_POS- I have confidence in the way the organisation is run	429	1	5	2.93	1.190	1.415	.145	.118	-1.011	.235
20c_C-LME- My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team	429	1	5	2.35	.922	.849	.763	.118	.379	.235
20e_JD-FC- The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work	429	1	5	2.02	.833	.694	1.213	.118	2.421	.235
20f_TFE-FOO Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation	429	1	5	2.81	1.054	1.111	.287	.118	-.687	.235
20i_R-NF I am given good feedback on the work I do	429	1	5	2.59	.991	.981	.524	.118	-.418	.235
21a_JD-TP There are enough staff that I can take annual leave when I choose to	429	1	5	2.74	1.173	1.376	.353	.118	-.957	.235
21b_C-LME- My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does	429	1	5	2.18	.926	.858	.895	.118	.559	.235
21c_CAMERAD-There is good team spirit in my department	429	1	5	2.27	.919	.845	.845	.118	.640	.235

21d_R-NFR- This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile	429	1	5	2.86	1.090	1.187	.140	.118	-.927	.235
21g_C-IES Staff are always consulted about change at work	429	1	5	3.42	.972	.945	-.348	.118	-.549	.235
21i_OTHER -I have other jobs options open to me, but choose not to take them at this time	429	1	5	3.40	1.090	1.188	-.325	.118	-.688	.235
22a_OTHER-I would only leave my current job if a better offer came up	429	1	5	2.36	1.054	1.110	.784	.118	-.118	.235
22b_POS- I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees	429	1	5	2.86	1.100	1.211	.358	.118	-.786	.235
22c_C-IEC I feel able to openly express my opinions about work when I'm at work	429	1	5	2.47	.980	.960	.681	.118	-.305	.235
22d_R-PO There are good career progression opportunities open to me	429	1	5	3.26	1.074	1.152	-.267	.118	-.652	.235
22g_CAMARAD The friendly working environment in my department makes me want to come to work	429	1	5	2.50	.954	.909	.508	.118	-.171	.235
22j_C-LME - I trust my line manager to keep confidences	429	1	5	2.39	1.055	1.113	.719	.118	-.080	.235
23a_C-IES- I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	429	1	5	2.97	1.092	1.193	.181	.118	-.959	.235

23b_JD-FC I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day	429	1	5	2.48	1.095	1.199	.603	.118	-.430	.235
23e_R-PO I have regular meetings with my supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression	429	1	5	3.30	1.113	1.240	-.344	.118	-.722	.235
23f_TFE- The organisation treats its staff fairly	429	1	5	2.79	1.016	1.033	.326	.118	-.623	.235
23j_TFE-PSC I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates	429	1	5	2.63	.953	.907	.643	.118	-.221	.235
24c_JD-E I have clear goals that enable me to do my job effectively	429	1	5	2.52	.903	.816	.671	.118	-.050	.235
24d_C-IES I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work	429	1	5	2.81	1.074	1.154	.302	.118	-.957	.235
24e_R-NFR If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised	429	1	5	2.90	1.041	1.084	.159	.118	-.739	.235
24f_POS- If I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks) I feel confident that my organisation would support me	429	1	5	2.30	.944	.891	1.002	.118	.899	.235
24g_POS- I am confident the organisation will support me in difficult times	413	1	5	2.51	1.006	1.013	.745	.120	.110	.240
RevQ12d	429	1.00	5.00	3.6760	1.14993	1.322	-.565	.118	-.724	.235
RevQ12e	429	1.00	5.00	3.0629	1.10363	1.218	.095	.118	-1.097	.235

RevQ13c	429	1.00	5.00	3.5501	1.04364	1.089	-.580	.118	-.353	.235
RevQ13d	429	1.00	5.00	2.6154	1.12068	1.256	.420	.118	-.789	.235
RevQ13f	429	1.00	5.00	3.7879	.96152	.925	-.911	.118	.778	.235
RevQ14e	429	1.00	5.00	2.0490	.94470	.892	.921	.118	.515	.235
RevQ15a	429	1.00	5.00	2.7506	1.19999	1.440	.409	.118	-.810	.235
RevQ15c	429	1.00	5.00	3.4615	1.03965	1.081	-.436	.118	-.456	.235
RevQ15h	429	1.00	5.00	2.5897	1.32358	1.752	.470	.118	-1.021	.235
RevQ16d	429	1.00	5.00	3.1235	1.13818	1.295	-.168	.118	-.974	.235
RevQ16h	429	1.00	5.00	3.6853	1.05294	1.109	-.780	.118	.022	.235
RevQ16j	429	1.00	5.00	2.6900	1.21687	1.481	.330	.118	-.951	.235
RevQ17b	429	1.00	5.00	2.4825	1.06244	1.129	.680	.118	-.198	.235
RevQ17d	429	1.00	5.00	3.2797	1.11535	1.244	-.315	.118	-.808	.235
RevQ17g	429	1.00	5.00	2.6807	1.10357	1.218	.343	.118	-.624	.235
RevQ17i	429	1.00	5.00	2.5641	1.03161	1.064	.539	.118	-.339	.235
RevQ18a	429	1.00	5.00	3.6597	1.01428	1.029	-.737	.118	-.182	.235
RevQ18b	429	1.00	5.00	3.0979	.89376	.799	.004	.118	-.564	.235
RevQ18c	429	1.00	5.00	2.8834	1.15217	1.328	.119	.118	-.940	.235
RevQ18d	429	1.00	5.00	3.0280	1.12498	1.266	-.164	.118	-.911	.235
RevQ18e	429	1.00	5.00	3.3823	1.13905	1.297	-.341	.118	-.884	.235
RevQ18j	429	1.00	5.00	3.1445	1.14492	1.311	-.126	.118	-.895	.235
RevQ19a	429	1.00	5.00	2.5641	1.11016	1.232	.666	.118	-.423	.235

RevQ20d	429	1.00	5.00	3.3986	.98451	.969	-.232	.118	-.905	.235
RevQ20h	429	1.00	5.00	2.3823	1.11626	1.246	.672	.118	-.308	.235
RevQ20j	429	1.00	5.00	2.9021	1.12728	1.271	.213	.118	-.991	.235
RevQ21e	429	1.00	5.00	2.8555	.99184	.984	.279	.118	-.729	.235
RevQ21f	429	1.00	5.00	1.9417	.90371	.817	1.088	.118	1.340	.235
RevQ21h	429	1.00	5.00	2.8065	1.08832	1.184	.194	.118	-.936	.235
RevQ21j	429	1.00	5.00	2.6946	1.16711	1.362	.259	.118	-.964	.235
RevQ22e	429	1.00	5.00	2.4732	1.01270	1.026	.616	.118	-.218	.235
RevQ22f	429	1.00	5.00	3.3497	1.04070	1.083	-.214	.118	-.789	.235
RevQ22h	429	1.00	5.00	2.2634	.96823	.937	.786	.118	.380	.235
RevQ22i	429	1.00	5.00	2.2098	1.02209	1.045	.784	.118	-.051	.235
RevQ23c	429	1.00	5.00	2.8648	1.04586	1.094	.359	.118	-.924	.235
RevQ23d	429	1.00	5.00	3.4242	1.05102	1.105	-.369	.118	-.716	.235
RevQ23g	429	1.00	5.00	2.6503	1.14951	1.321	.444	.118	-.824	.235
RevQ23h	429	1.00	5.00	3.2028	1.08447	1.176	-.222	.118	-.797	.235
RevQ23i	429	1.00	5.00	2.9604	1.19023	1.417	-.015	.118	-1.194	.235
RevQ24a	429	1.00	5.00	3.6550	1.32811	1.764	-.616	.118	-.974	.235
RevQ24b	429	1.00	5.00	3.3403	1.11102	1.234	-.292	.118	-.811	.235
Valid N (listwise)	412									

Appendix I

Study 2a - Rotated Component Matrix – 23 Factors

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component																						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
16i_TFE=PSC My supervisor/manager treats people fairly	.787																						
14h_C-LME People in my team respect my supervisor/manager	.782																						
20c_C-LME- My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team	.775																						
17c_C-IES-My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job	.771																						
19i_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work	.760																						

13gC-LME-We can trust our supervisor/manager	.749
22h_C-LME My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team	-.741
19j_C-LME- My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job	.725
13a_C-LME-Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job	.700
19d_TFE-PSC My manager is consistent in his approach to dealing with staff	.696
16a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right	.671
22j_C-LME - I trust my line manager to keep confidences	.667

21b_C-LME- My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does	.661																								
13e_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential	.658		.322																						
17h_R- NF When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager	.657	.320																							
12a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake	.637																								
20i_R-NF I am given good feedback on the work I do	.599	.359																							
15j_C-LME-My supervisor/manager is key to the performance of my team	.562																								
15f_R-IIS My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills	.551		.513																						

18i_JD-E- My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work	.531							.315																
18g_JD-TP My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it	.509			.431																				
19g_C-IEC I feel able to voice my opinions and influence change in my area of work	.474																							
13d_CAMERAD- I sometimes feel that there is little team support in my department	-.430									-.407														
24c_JD-E I have clear goals that enable me to do my job effectively	.429	.372																						
22c_C-IEC I feel able to openly express my opinions about work when I'm at work	.395	.380																						
15e_JD-E I understand what is expected of me at work	.379				.309																			
22b_POS- I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees		.728																						
24e_R-NFR If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised		.717	.319																					

23f_TFE- The organisation treats its staff fairly	.323	.709
19c_TFE-FOP - People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation		.688
16c_POS- The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs		.679
20b_POS- I have confidence in the way the organisation is run		.676
23a_C-IES- I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	.334	.670
21d_R-NFR- This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile	.344	.669
12b_NFR- The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	.311	.654

21g_C-IES Staff are always consulted about change at work	.652																						
14b_R-NF- When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it	.642																						
20f_TFE-FOO Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation	.641																						
23h_TFE-PSC I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation	-.639												.403										
19e_R-PO This organisation promotes staff who work hard	.621	.451																					
18d_R-NFR The company does not seem to reward hard work	-.612	-.388																					
23d_TFE-PSC - Some people get away with a lot in this organisation	-.584																						
16h_C-IES- Changes at work are often made without staff having any say in them	-.580																						

17d_C-IEC - I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me		-.568																					
18j_TFEPSC - A significant number of people don't pull their weight in this organisation		-.549																					
12c_PO- If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation		.549	.504																				
17a_POS-The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life	.345	.535																					
24g_POS- I am confident the organisation will support me in difficult times	.321	.531										.478											
24d_C-IES I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work	.360	.516					.321																
22e_OTHER No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation		-.476																			.426		

23j_TFE-PSC I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates	.373	.471												-.306											
16b_CAMARAD- There is a friendly working atmosphere within the organisation	.363	.452										.387													
19b_POS- This organisation offers a fair days work for a fair days pay		.444																							
17i_TFE-PSC I often feel that I am not treated fairly compared with my colleagues	-.356	-.429												.346											
14f_OTHER I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation		.408			.403																				
24b_R-PO There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation		-.385	-.691																						
18c_R-PO There are no real career opportunities in this organisation		-.374	-.681																						
15b_R-PO I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation		.460	.650																						

22d_R-PO There are good career progression opportunities open to me		.486	.644																						
16e_TFE-FOO I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair		.325	.631																						
13j_R-IIS The company encourages me to develop new skills	.311	.381	.615																						
14j_R-IIS There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation	.309	.440	.606																						
13b_R-IIS-I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers	.346		.582																						
16d_R-PO I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation			-.577																						

19f_R-PO My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place	.454		.493																					
14a_R-IIS I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs	.436		.492																					
23e_R-PO I have regular meetings with my supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression	.452	.318	.464																					
17g_R-IIS- This organisation does not invest in its staff		-.417	-.452																					
16j_OTHER-I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities		-.352	-.384									-.364												
17f_JD-FC I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments				.798																				
15d_JD-FC I can work flexi time when I choose				.783																				

14i_JD-FC I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work			.761																						
19a_JD-FC It is not easy to get time off to run personal errands			-.692																						
23g_JDE-FC There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work			-.666																						
20e_JD-FC- The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work			.507																						
15i_JD-FC My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment			.493																.393						
14d_JD-E It's up to me if I want to work overtime/longer hours			.408																						
23i_JD-EXPECT I feel under pressure to go to work even when I am ill	-.312		-.383										.371												

22i_POS I am worried that if I take time off sick I might lose my job				-.311																			
13h_IJS- Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction					.743																		
18h_IJS- I believe that my job is valuable to people both within and external to the organisation I work in					.712																		
15g_IJS- I get a sense of achievement from doing my job					.672																		
14e_IJS- My job adds no value to others					-.633																		
13i_CAMERAD -I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work					-.413												-.330						
12d_JD-WLB-Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week						.781																	
24a_JD-WLB I often work more than 40 hours per week						.769																	

15a_JD-E My supervisor/manager expects me to work more than 40 hours per week						.738																	
22f_JD-WLB I would like to work less hours						.502																	
23c_JD-E I feel under pressure to work long hours						.429		-.302	.392														
20j_JD-FC I have very little control over the amount of work I have to do each day							-.728																
21e_JD-TP I have very little control over the speed at which I work							-.672																
23b_JD-FC I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day				.429			.568																
18f_JD-FC I can plan my working day				.379			.532																
16g_JD-TP I am confident I could continue working at my current pace until retirement							.335																
12f_JD-TP-I am confident that I have enough time to do my job to the best of my ability								.684															

14c_JD-TP I have achievable deadlines		.344					.596																		
20d_JD-TP I feel I often have to work faster than I would like in order to get all my work done							-.552	.320																	
21a_JD-TP There are enough staff that I can take annual leave when I choose to				.346			.441																		
17j_JD-WLB I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home								.715																	
21j_JD-WLB Often I can't sleep at night because I am thinking about work								.662																	
18e_JD-WLB I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done						.419		.541																	
21c_CAMERAD-There is good team spirit in my department	.396								.659																

22g_CAMARAD The friendly working environment in my department makes me want to come to work	.334	.349								.619													
14g_CAMARAD -I trust my colleagues	.366	.308								.523													
12h_JD-EXPECT-Members of my team are willing to go the extra mile to meet my supervisor/manager's work goals	.305									.443										.416			
17b_OTHER-I would leave my current job if another offer was made to me even if it was not necessarily a better job	-.331										-.555												
12j_OTHER-I have no intention of leaving my current employer	.337	.319									.505												
20a_OTHER- I am happy in my current job	.414	.378									.497												
17e_POS- My organisation would do everything possible to help me return to work if I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks)												.623											

24f_POS- If I had to take long term sick leave (more than two weeks) I feel confident that my organisation would support me	.311	.371							.335			.616	.671										
18a_JD-E If I take time off I worry about letting others down													.631										
13c_JD-EXPECTI often go into work when I am ill and know I should really stay at home															.553								
15c_TFE-PSC- Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort		-.473													.551								
13f_R-NF Some people get recognised more than others in this organisation		-.493														.774							
18b_R-NF If I under-perform at work my supervisor/manager is quick to point it out																							

21f_C-LME- If I under-perform at work my supervisor/manager will make an example of me in front of the people I work with	-.432													.509									
21h_TFE OTHER-I worry that if something goes wrong at work I will be blamed for it														.328									
20h_R-PO I am not interested in being promoted to a higher grade															.794								
16f_OTHER-My work is the most important thing in my life																.645							
22a_OTHER-I would only leave my current job if a better offer came up																	.792						
15h_OTHER-If I was really unhappy at work I would leave my job without necessarily having another job to go to																				.738			
21i_OTHER -I have other jobs options open to me, but choose not to take them at this time																					.669		

12i_C-LME-My manager always has a return to work meeting with me after I have been off sick to ensure I am fit to be back at work																						-.383	
12e_JD-WLB-When I finish work for the day I am too tired to do anything else						.316																	.515

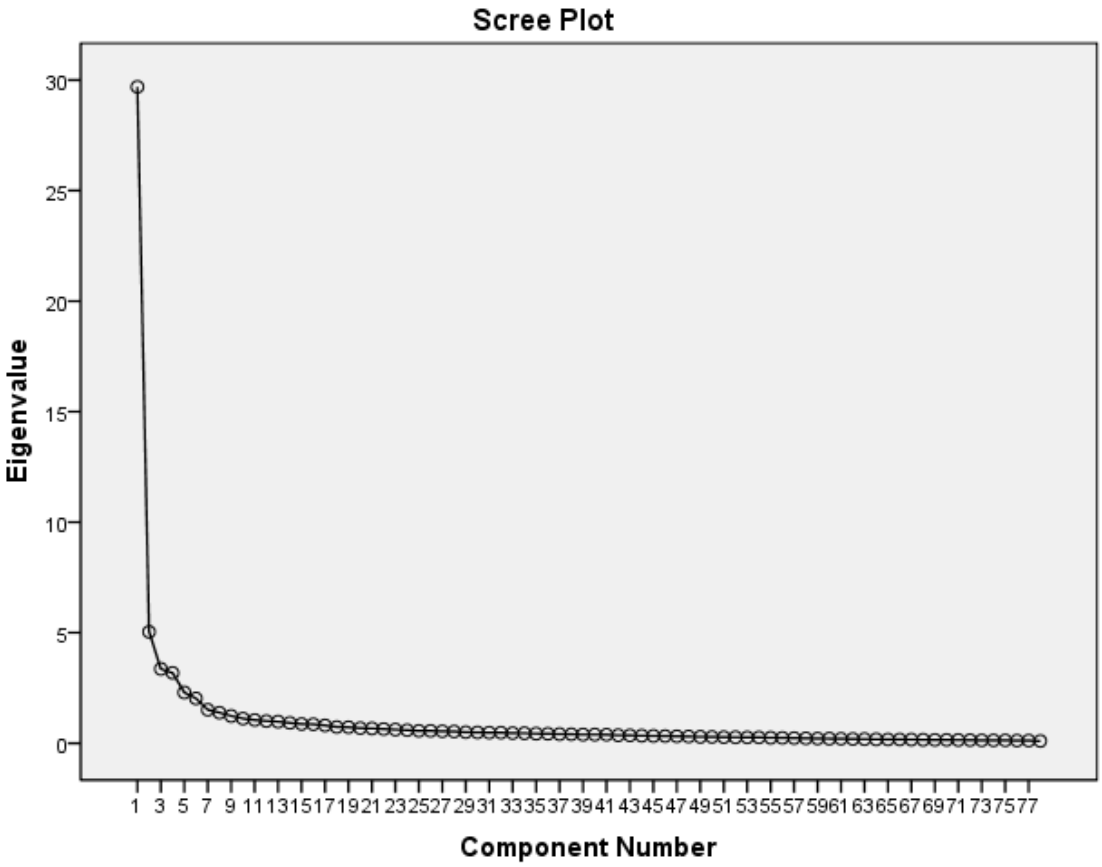
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.[a]

a. Rotation converged in 33 iterations.

Appendix J

Study 2a - Scree Plot of Factor Loadings



Appendix K

Study 2a – 14 Factor Oblimen Rotatiopn Pattern Matrix

Pattern Matrix[a]

	Component													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
22b_POS- I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees	.580													
12b_NFR- The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	.564													
16c_POS- The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs	.537													
24e_R-NFR If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised	.515													
23f_TFE- The organisation treats its staff fairly	.504													
21d_R-NFR- This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile	.492													
23a_C-IES- I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	.488													
20b_POS- I have confidence in the way the organisation is run	.480													-.349

19c_TFE-FOP - People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation	.434				-.323										
17a_POS-The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life	.424														
20f_TFE-FOO Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation	.385														
22h_C-LME My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team		-.752													
16i_TFE=PSC My supervisor/manager treats people fairly		.734													
20c_C-LME- My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team		.710													
17c_C-IES-My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job		.698													
14h_C-LME People in my team respect my supervisor/manager		.675													

19j_C-LME- My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job	.671										.348				
19d_TFE-PSC My manager is consistent in his approach to dealing with staff	.670														
19i_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work	.651														
21b_C-LME- My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does	.621														
16a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right	.614														
12a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake	.603										.311				
13gC-LME-We can trust our supervisor/manager	.602														

13a_C-LME-Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job		.545												-.356
13e_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential		.523												
17h_R- NF When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager		.489												
18i_JD-E- My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work		.406												
15d_JD-FC I can work flexi time when I choose			-.832											
17f_JD-FC I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments			-.813											
23g_JDE-FC There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work			.770											
14i_JD-FC I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work			-.712											
18f_JD-FC I can plan my working day			-.400											

23b_JD-FC I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day			-.366							.323				
18g_JD-TP My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it		.348	-.353											
18e_JD-WLB I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done				.842										
23c_JD-E I feel under pressure to work long hours				.749										
24a_JD-WLB I often work more than 40 hours per week				.676					-.417					
17j_JD-WLB I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home				.657										
18j_TFEPSC - A significant number of people don't pull their weight in this organisation					.847									
23d_TFE-PSC - Some people get away with a lot in this organisation					.843									
23h_TFE-PSC I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation					.596									

15c_TFE-PSC- Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort					.508										
13h_IJS- Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction						-.905									
15g_IJS- I get a sense of achievement from doing my job						-.689									
13i_CAMERAD -I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work						.600						.355			
14f_OTHER I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation						-.485									-.308
24b_R-PO There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation							.694								
18c_R-PO There are no real career opportunities in this organisation							.614						.301		
22d_R-PO There are good career progression opportunities open to me							-.575								
15b_R-PO I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation							-.507						-.322		

16j_OTHER-I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities							.474							.316
16d_R-PO I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation							.460							.308
12c_PO- If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation	.328						-.404							
19e_R-PO This organisation promotes staff who work hard							-.363	.313						
23j_TFE-PSC I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates		.345					-.354							
18d_R-NFR The company does not seem to reward hard work							.332							
23e_R-PO I have regular meetings with my supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression								.663						
19f_R-PO My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place								.635						

14a_R-IIS I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs								.627							
14b_R-NF- When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it	.437							.476							
12d_JD-WLB-Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week									-.794						
16h_C-IES- Changes at work are often made without staff having any say in them										-.534					
21g_C-IES Staff are always consulted about change at work								.333		.494					
17d_C-IEC - I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me										-.359					
22i_POS I am worried that if I take time off sick I might lose my job										-.305					
24d_C-IES I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work										.305					

15i_JD-FC My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment											.668				
20e_JD-FC- The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work											.516				
22e_OTHER No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation												.364			
16e_TFE-FOO I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair													-.735		
13b_R-IIS-I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers													-.713		
13j_R-IIS The company encourages me to develop new skills													-.652		
14j_R-IIS There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation													-.588		
15f_R-IIS My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills		.348											-.457		
17g_R-IIS- This organisation does not invest in its staff													.452		

12j_OTHER-I have no intention of leaving my current employer														-.698
20a_OTHER- I am happy in my current job														-.516

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 49 iterations.

Appendix L

Study 2a – Rotated Component Matrix – 10 Factors

- **Rotated Component Matrix[a]**

	Component									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
16i_TFE=PSC My supervisor/manager treats people fairly	.796									
14h_C-LME People in my team respect my supervisor/manager	.792									
20c_C-LME- My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team	.773									
17c_C-IES-My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job	.771									
13gC-LME-We can trust our supervisor/manager	.752									
19i_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work	.751									
22h_C-LME My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team	-.747									
19j_C-LME- My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job	.730									
13a_C-LME-Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job	.701									
16a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right	.700									
21b_C-LME- My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does	.684									
19d_TFE-PSC My manager is consistent in his approach to dealing with staff	.682									
22j_C-LME - I trust my line manager to keep confidences	.663									

12a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake	.659									-.333
13e_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential	.649									
17h_R- NF When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager	.628									
18i_JD-E- My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work	.541									
15f_R-IIS My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills	.532		.403						.360	
18g_JD-TP My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it	.508			.456						
23j_TFE-PSC I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates	.422	.360	.384		-.339					
22b_POS- I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees		.752								
20b_POS- I have confidence in the way the organisation is run		.703								
23f_TFE- The organisation treats its staff fairly	.338	.667								
16c_POS- The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs	.322	.664								
23a_C-IES- I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	.306	.637								
12b_NFR- The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	.319	.634	.312							
24e_R-NFR If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised		.628	.416							
19c_TFE-FOP - People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation		.619			-.341					
21d_R-NFR- This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile	.338	.583	.307							

20f_TFE-FOO Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation		.582	.331							
21g_C-IES Staff are always consulted about change at work		.557						.388		
17a_POS-The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life	.340	.545								
14b_R-NF- When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it		.541						.442		
16h_C-IES- Changes at work are often made without staff having any say in them		-.495								
24d_C-IES I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work	.334	.460								.312
17d_C-IEC - I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me		-.423	-.313							
24b_R-PO There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation			-.760							
18c_R-PO There are no real career opportunities in this organisation			-.739							
15b_R-PO I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation		.367	.728							
22d_R-PO There are good career progression opportunities open to me		.326	.720							
16d_R-PO I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation			-.703							
12c_PO- If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation		.404	.582							
16j_OTHER-I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities			-.580							
19e_R-PO This organisation promotes staff who work hard		.432	.529							
18d_R-NFR The company does not seem to reward hard work		-.459	-.519							
13j_R-IIS The company encourages me to develop new skills		.341	.512						.425	

14j_R-IIS There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation		.371	.500						.388	
17g_R-IIS- This organisation does not invest in its staff		-.371	-.438						-.301	
22e_OTHER No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation		-.317	-.402		.321					
17f_JD-FC I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments				.803						
14i_JD-FC I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work				.779						
15d_JD-FC I can work flexi time when I choose				.766						
23g_JDE-FC There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work				-.678						
15i_JD-FC My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment	.306			.589						
23b_JD-FC I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day				.575						.404
20e_JD-FC- The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work	.321			.566						
18f_JD-FC I can plan my working day				.550						.316
23d_TFE-PSC - Some people get away with a lot in this organisation					.725					
18j_TFEPSC - A significant number of people don't pull their weight in this organisation		-.302			.707					
23h_TFE-PSC I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation		-.404	-.342		.590					
15c_TFE-PSC- Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort		-.310			.483					
18e_JD-WLB I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done						.795				
24a_JD-WLB I often work more than 40 hours per week						.794				

17j_JD-WLB I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home						.697				
23c_JD-E I feel under pressure to work long hours						.642				
12d_JD-WLB-Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week						.536				.439
13h_IJS- Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction							.742			
15g_IJS- I get a sense of achievement from doing my job			.313				.701			
13i_CAMERAD -I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work							-.586			
14f_OTHER I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation		.407					.569			
20a_OTHER- I am happy in my current job	.431	.416	.302				.454			
12j_OTHER-I have no intention of leaving my current employer	.350	.357	.303				.412			
23e_R-PO I have regular meetings with my supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression	.380		.364					.650		
14a_R-IIS I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs	.360		.335					.616		
19f_R-PO My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place	.397		.417					.612		
16e_TFE-FOO I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair		.323	.471						.534	
13b_R-IIS-I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers	.323	.304	.421						.450	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.[a]

a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

Appendix M

Study 2a - Rotated Component Matrix – 6 Factors

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
23h_TFE-PSC I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation	-.745					
19c_TFE-FOP - People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation	.725					
23d_TFE-PSC - Some people get away with a lot in this organisation	-.694					
23f_TFE- The organisation treats its staff fairly	.694	.326				
24e_R-NFR If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised	.694		.356			
20f_TFE-FOO Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation	.658					
22b_POS- I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees	.657					
21d_R-NFR- This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile	.642	.322	.303			
18j_TFEPSC - A significant number of people don't pull their weight in this organisation	-.640					
16c_POS- The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs	.637	.302				
18d_R-NFR The company does not seem to reward hard work	-.632		-.383			

20b_POS- I have confidence in the way the organisation is run	.612					
19e_R-PO This organisation promotes staff who work hard	.597		.493			
15c_TFE-PSC- Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort	-.592					
16h_C-IES- Changes at work are often made without staff having any say in them	-.591					
17d_C-IEC - I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me	-.589					
21g_C-IES Staff are always consulted about change at work	.575					
23j_TFE-PSC I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates	.570	.393				
12b_NFR- The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	.563	.301	.338			
23a_C-IES- I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	.557	.314	.317			
14b_R-NF- When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it	.537		.433			
22e_OTHER No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation	-.534					

12c_PO- If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation	.530		.513			
24d_C-IES I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work	.480	.331	.323	.334		
17a_POS-The fact that the organisation supports its staff improves my quality of working life	.479	.327	.340	.302		
17g_R-IIS- This organisation does not invest in its staff	-.437		-.418	-.313		
16i_TFE=PSC My supervisor/manager treats people fairly		.791				
14h_C-LME People in my team respect my supervisor/manager		.779				
20c_C-LME- My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team		.771				
17c_C-IES-My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job		.766				
19i_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work		.744				
13gC-LME-We can trust our supervisor/manager		.743				
22h_C-LME My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team		-.736				
19j_C-LME- My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job		.720				

13a_C-LME-Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job		.692				
19d_TFE-PSC My manager is consistent in his approach to dealing with staff		.684				
16a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right		.675				
21b_C-LME- My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does		.670				
22j_C-LME - I trust my line manager to keep confidences		.667				
13e_R-NF My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential		.631	.401			
17h_R- NF When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager		.628				
12a_C-LME-My supervisor/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if s/he thought they made an honest mistake		.627				
18i_JD-E- My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work		.548				
18g_JD-TP My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it		.500		.471		

14j_R-IIS There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation	.373		.677			
16e_TFE-FOO I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair			.662			
14a_R-IIS I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs		.365	.661			
13j_R-IIS The company encourages me to develop new skills	.331		.634			
19f_R-PO My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place		.398	.632			
23e_R-PO I have regular meetings with my supervisor/manager to discuss my career progression		.388	.618			
15b_R-PO I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation	.473		.609			
13b_R-IIS-I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers			.606			
22d_R-PO There are good career progression opportunities open to me	.510		.598			
18c_R-PO There are no real career opportunities in this organisation	-.404		-.593		-.311	
24b_R-PO There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation	-.431		-.591			

15f_R-IIS My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills		.510	.585			
16d_R-PO I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation	-.330		-.518		-.381	
17f_JD-FC I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments				.801		
14i_JD-FC I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work				.766		
15d_JD-FC I can work flexi time when I choose				.762		
23b_JD-FC I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day				.628		
23g_JDE-FC There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work				-.624		
18f_JD-FC I can plan my working day				.601		
20e_JD-FC- The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work		.309		.566		
15i_JD-FC My organisation would allow me time off at short notice to attend a medical appointment				.559		
15g_IJS- I get a sense of achievement from doing my job					.718	

13i_CAMERAD -I can count on my colleagues to support me if I have a difficult day at work					-.592	
13h_IJS- Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction					.583	
20a_OTHER- I am happy in my current job	.402	.413			.528	
14f_OTHER I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation	.403				.509	
12j_OTHER-I have no intention of leaving my current employer	.320	.339			.497	
16j_OTHER-I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities	-.451				-.455	
24a_JD-WLB I often work more than 40 hours per week						.804
18e_JD-WLB I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done						.794
17j_JD-WLB I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home						.683
23c_JD-E I feel under pressure to work long hours						.635
12d_JD-WLB-Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week						.562

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.[a]

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Appendix N

Study 2a – Factor Loadings

Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment		
23h	I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation	-.746
19c	People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation	.726
23d	Some people get away with a lot in this organisation	-.694
24e	If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised	.694
23f	The organisation treats its staff fairly	.689
20f	Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation	.660
22b	I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees	.658
21d	This organisation recognises when staff go the extra mile	.642
18j	A significant number of people don't pull their weight in this organisation	-.636
16c	The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs	.636
18d	The company does not seem to reward hard work	-.632
20b	I have confidence in the way the organisation is run	.612
19e	This organisation promotes staff who work hard*	.599
15c	Some people get more rewarded than others for the same effort	-.593
16h	Changes at work are often made without staff having any say in them	-.590
17d	I do not feel involved in decisions made in this organisation that affect me	-.585
21g	Staff are always consulted about change at work	.573
23j	I feel I am given the same opportunities as my workmates	.570
12b	The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	.562
23a	I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	.557
14b	When staff perform well, this organisation makes sure everyone knows about it*	.535
12c	If you perform well you get promoted in this organisation*	.532
22e	No-one really cares whether or not you work hard in this organisation	-.532
24d	I feel that I am involved in decisions that affect how I work	.481
Leader-Member exchange		
16i	My manager/supervisor treats people fairly	.803
14h	People in my team respect my supervisor/manager	.777
20c	My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team	.776
17c	My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job	.763
19i	My supervisor/manager recognises the effort team members put in to their work	.746
13g	We can trust our supervisor/manager	.743
22h	My supervisor/manager doesn't show any interest in people in our team	-.736
19j	My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job	.714

19d	My manager is consistent in his approach to dealing with staff	.697
13a	Members of my team respect my supervisor/manager's knowledge and competence on the job	.688
16a	My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right	.674
22j	I trust my line manager to keep confidences	.666
21b	My supervisor/manager has a good understanding of the work my team does	.665
12a	My supervisor/manager would defend members of my team to others in the organisation if he thought they made an honest mistake	.626
13e	My supervisor/manager recognises peoples' potential*	.624
17h	When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager	.623
18i	My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work	.546
18g	My supervisor/manager will give people time when they need it*	.503
Development, Investment and Training		
17g	This organisation does not invest in its staff*	-.416
14j	There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation	.677
14a	I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs	.663
16e	I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair	.660
13j	The company encourages me to develop new skills	.633
19f	My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place	.631
23e	I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my career progression	.617
13b	I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers	.606
15b	I am satisfied with the career opportunities available to me in the organisation*	.605
22d	There are good career progression opportunities open to me*	.592
18c	There are no real career opportunities in this organisation*	-.590
15f	My supervisor/manager encourages me to develop new skills*	.588
24b	There are very few promotion opportunities in this organisation*	-.583
16d	I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation	-.516
Flexibility		
17f	I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments	.798
14i	I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work	.765
15d	I can work flexi time when I choose	.761
23b	I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day	.627
23g	There is no option for me to vary the number of ho urs I work each day where I work	-.624
18f	I can plan my working day	.601
20e	The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work	.563
15j	My supervisor/manager is key to the performance of my team	.555
Job Satisfaction		
15g	I get a sense of achievement from doing my job	.716
13i	For me work is just about earning enough money to do what I want to do in the time when I am not at work	-.593

13h	Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction	.580
20a	I am happy in my current job*	.528
14f	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation	.512
12j	I have no intention of leaving my current employer	.499
16j	I feel trapped in my current job due to a lack of other job opportunities*	-.462
Work-life Balance		
24a	I often work more than 40 hours per week	.804
18e	I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done	.794
17j	I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home	.681
23c	I feel under pressure to work long hours	.634
12d	Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week	.563

Appendix O

Study 2b - Reduced Item Set with Factor Loadings

Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment	*Loading*
I often feel that certain people are unfairly favoured by the organisation	-.746
People are treated equally regardless of their position in the organisation	.726
If you try hard in this organisation it will be recognised	.694
Everyone is given an equal opportunity to get on in this organisation	.660
I trust the organisation I work for to do what is right for its employees	.658
The organisation demonstrates that it cares about the people it employs	.636
The company does not seem to reward hard work	-.632
Changes at work are often made without staff having any say in them	-.590
The organisation makes every effort to reward me in ways that are meaningful to me	.562
I feel that the organisation is good at giving feedback about what is happening and what is planned	.557
Leader-Member exchange	
My manager/supervisor treats people fairly	.803
People in my team respect my supervisor/manager	.777
My supervisor/manager does his/her best to care for the well-being of members of my team	.776
My supervisor/manager values team members' views on how to do the job	.763
We can trust our supervisor/manager	.743
My supervisor/manager helps people in my team to solve problems that come up in their job	.714
My supervisor/manager would stand by members of my team if s/he thought they were right	.674
When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my supervisor/manager	.623
My manager has reasonable expectations of what I can achieve at work	.546
Development, Investment and Training	
There is a strong emphasis on staff development in this organisation	.677
I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my training needs	.663
I feel that opportunities to access training and development are fair	.660
The company encourages me to develop new skills	.633
My manager and I have regular meetings to discuss my potential to progress within the organisation and we have a clear plan in place	.631
I have regular meetings with my manager to discuss my career progression	.617
I am satisfied with the training/personal development opportunities that my employer offers	.606
I am unclear about how I might develop my career within this organisation	-.516

Flexibility	
I can vary the length of my working day to fit in with my non-work commitments	.798
I can adjust my working hours if I have personal commitments outside work	.765
I can work flexi time when I choose	.761
I have a lot of choice over how to organise my working day	.627
There is no option for me to vary the number of hours I work each day where I work	-.624
I can plan my working day	.601
The organisation I work for will give me time off if I have to deal with important life issues outside work	.563
My supervisor/manager is key to the performance of my team	.555
Job Satisfaction	
I get a sense of achievement from doing my job	.716
For me work is just about earning enough money to do what I want to do in the time when I am not at work	-.593
Feeling that I help people through doing my job gives me a great sense of satisfaction	.580
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation	.512
I have no intention of leaving my current employer	.499
Work-Life Balance	
I often work more than 40 hours per week	.804
I regularly stay late, or take work home in order to get everything that I need to do done	.794
I often spend time thinking about what I have to do at work when I am at home	.681
I feel under pressure to work long hours	.634
Most people I work with are at work more than 40 hours per week	.563

Appendix P

Study 2b – SPSS ANOVA Outputs - Age

Age – Factor 1

Descriptives

SUM F1

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	30	68.77	7.691	1.404	65.89	71.64	56	83
2	331	69.47	8.735	.480	68.52	70.41	48	92
3	44	70.00	9.096	1.371	67.23	72.77	53	88
Total	405	69.47	8.686	.432	68.63	70.32	48	92

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F1

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.822	2	402	.440

ANOVA

SUM F1

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	27.194	2	13.597	.179	.836
Within Groups	30451.784	402	75.751		
Total	30478.978	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F1

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	.197	2	56.400	.822
Brown-Forsythe	.191	2	88.041	.827

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

SUM F1 – Multiple Comparisons

Tukey HSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.702	1.659	.906	-4.61	3.20
	3	-1.233	2.061	.821	-6.08	3.61
2	1	.702	1.659	.906	-3.20	4.61
	3	-.532	1.397	.923	-3.82	2.75
3	1	1.233	2.061	.821	-3.61	6.08
	2	.532	1.397	.923	-2.75	3.82

SUM F1

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
1	30	68.77
2	331	69.47
3	44	70.00
Sig.		.755

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 50.777.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Age – factor 2

Descriptives

SUM F2

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	30	43.93	9.468	1.729	40.40	47.47	29	71
2	331	44.52	12.167	.669	43.20	45.83	19	88
3	44	45.41	13.184	1.988	41.40	49.42	23	80
Total	405	44.57	12.082	.600	43.39	45.75	19	88

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F2

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.464	2	402	.232

ANOVA

SUM F2

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	44.083	2	22.041	.150	.860
Within Groups	58925.162	402	146.580		
Total	58969.244	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F2

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	.156	2	57.722	.856
Brown-Forsythe	.166	2	87.987	.847

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F2

Tukey HSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.583	2.308	.965	-6.01	4.85
	3	-1.476	2.867	.864	-8.22	5.27
2	1	.583	2.308	.965	-4.85	6.01
	3	-.892	1.943	.890	-5.46	3.68
3	1	1.476	2.867	.864	-5.27	8.22
	2	.892	1.943	.890	-3.68	5.46

SUM F2

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
1	30	43.93
2	331	44.52
3	44	45.41
Sig.		.812

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 50.777.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Age – factor 3

Descriptives

SUM F3

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	30	40.50	6.962	1.271	37.90	43.10	30	56
2	331	41.55	6.099	.335	40.89	42.21	24	58
3	44	42.86	5.901	.890	41.07	44.66	32	53
Total	405	41.61	6.151	.306	41.01	42.22	24	58

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F3

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.801	2	402	.449

ANOVA

SUM F3

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	107.302	2	53.651	1.421	.243
Within Groups	15178.609	402	37.758		
Total	15285.911	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F3

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	1.368	2	54.586	.263
Brown-Forsythe	1.297	2	74.369	.279

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F3

Tukey HSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-1.050	1.172	.643	-3.81	1.71
	3	-2.364	1.455	.236	-5.79	1.06
2	1	1.050	1.172	.643	-1.71	3.81
	3	-1.314	.986	.378	-3.63	1.01
3	1	2.364	1.455	.236	-1.06	5.79
	2	1.314	.986	.378	-1.01	3.63

SUM F3

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
1	30	40.50
2	331	41.55
3	44	42.86
Sig.		.129

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 50.777.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Age – Factor 4

Descriptives

SUM F4

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	30	22.10	5.081	.928	20.20	24.00	12	33
2	331	19.42	5.038	.277	18.87	19.96	8	36
3	44	19.20	4.391	.662	17.87	20.54	11	33
Total	405	19.59	5.015	.249	19.10	20.08	8	36

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F4

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.468	2	402	.626

ANOVA

SUM F4

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	205.453	2	102.727	4.149	.016
Within Groups	9954.324	402	24.762		
Total	10159.778	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F4

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	3.977	2	56.512	.024
Brown-Forsythe	4.493	2	78.501	.014

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F4

Tukey HSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	2.683*	.949	.014	.45	4.92
	3	2.895*	1.178	.038	.12	5.67
2	1	-2.683*	.949	.014	-4.92	-.45
	3	.212	.798	.962	-1.67	2.09
3	1	-2.895*	1.178	.038	-5.67	-.12
	2	-.212	.798	.962	-2.09	1.67

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

SUM F4

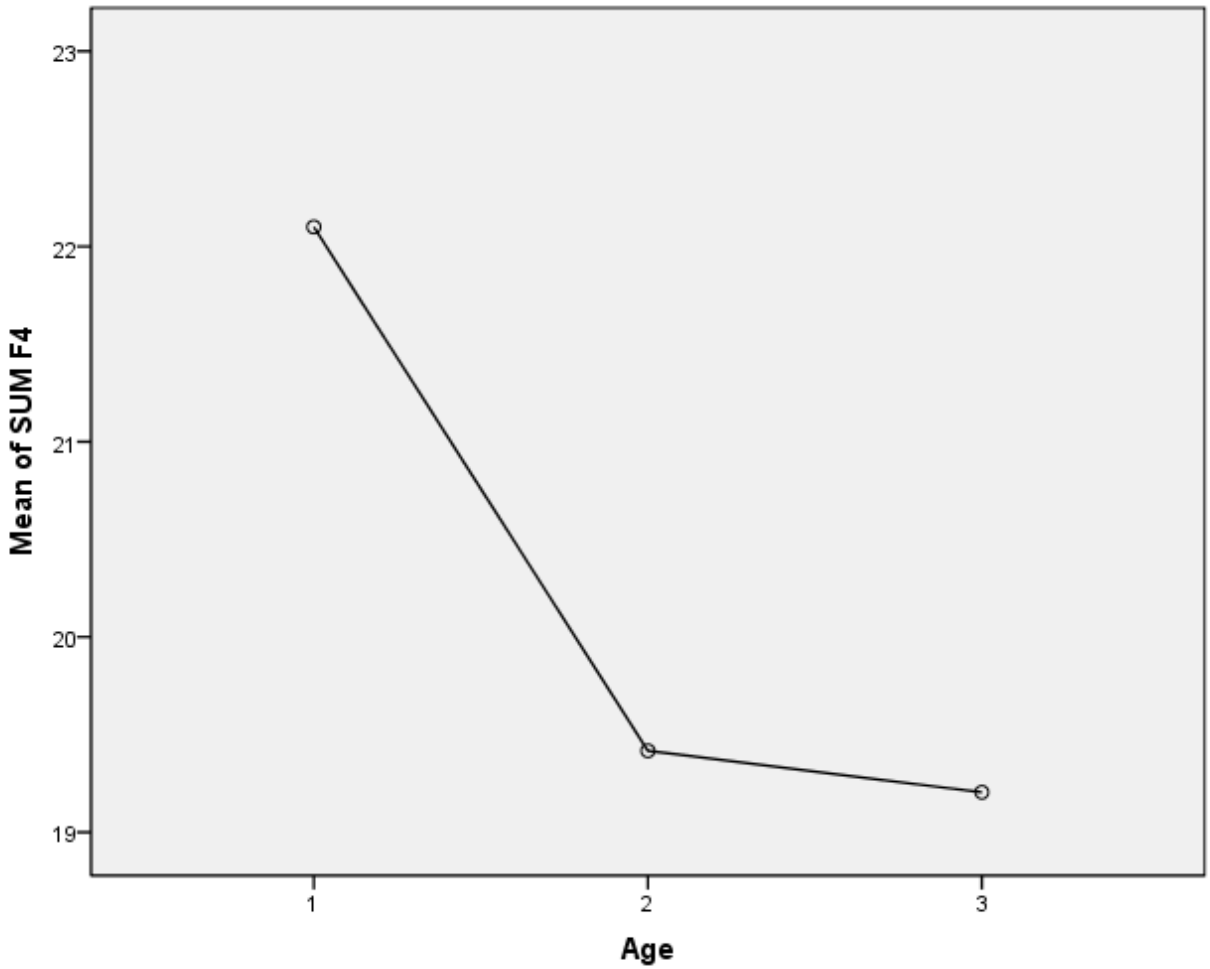
Tukey HSD[a,b]

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
3	44	19.20	
2	331	19.42	
1	30		22.10
Sig.		.975	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 50.777.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.


Mean of SUM F4
23
22
21
20
19
1
2
3
Age

Age – Factor 5

Descriptives

SUM F5

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	30	17.30	3.075	.562	16.15	18.45	12	24
2	331	18.11	3.047	.167	17.79	18.44	11	30
3	44	17.36	2.720	.410	16.54	18.19	13	24
Total	405	17.97	3.023	.150	17.68	18.27	11	30

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F5

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.141	2	402	.869

ANOVA

SUM F5

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36.582	2	18.291	2.011	.135
Within Groups	3656.119	402	9.095		
Total	3692.701	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F5

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	2.150	2	56.277	.126
Brown-Forsythe	2.146	2	79.311	.124

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F5

Tukey HSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.815	.575	.333	-2.17	.54
	3	-.064	.714	.996	-1.74	1.62
2	1	.815	.575	.333	-.54	2.17
	3	.751	.484	.268	-.39	1.89
3	1	.064	.714	.996	-1.62	1.74
	2	-.751	.484	.268	-1.89	.39

SUM F5

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
1	30	17.30
3	44	17.36
2	331	18.11
Sig.		.362

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 50.777.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Age – Factor 6

Descriptives

SUM F6

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	30	16.63	4.106	.750	15.10	18.17	6	24
2	331	12.54	4.053	.223	12.11	12.98	5	24
3	44	12.09	4.186	.631	10.82	13.36	6	23
Total	405	12.80	4.207	.209	12.39	13.21	5	24

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F6

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.102	2	402	.903

ANOVA

SUM F6

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	484.680	2	242.340	14.617	.000
Within Groups	6664.718	402	16.579		
Total	7149.398	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F6

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	14.193	2	55.028	.000
Brown-Forsythe	14.157	2	83.085	.000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F6

Tukey HSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	4.090*	.776	.000	2.26	5.92
	3	4.542*	.964	.000	2.27	6.81
2	1	-4.090*	.776	.000	-5.92	-2.26
	3	.453	.653	.768	-1.08	1.99
3	1	-4.542*	.964	.000	-6.81	-2.27
	2	-.453	.653	.768	-1.99	1.08

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

SUM F6

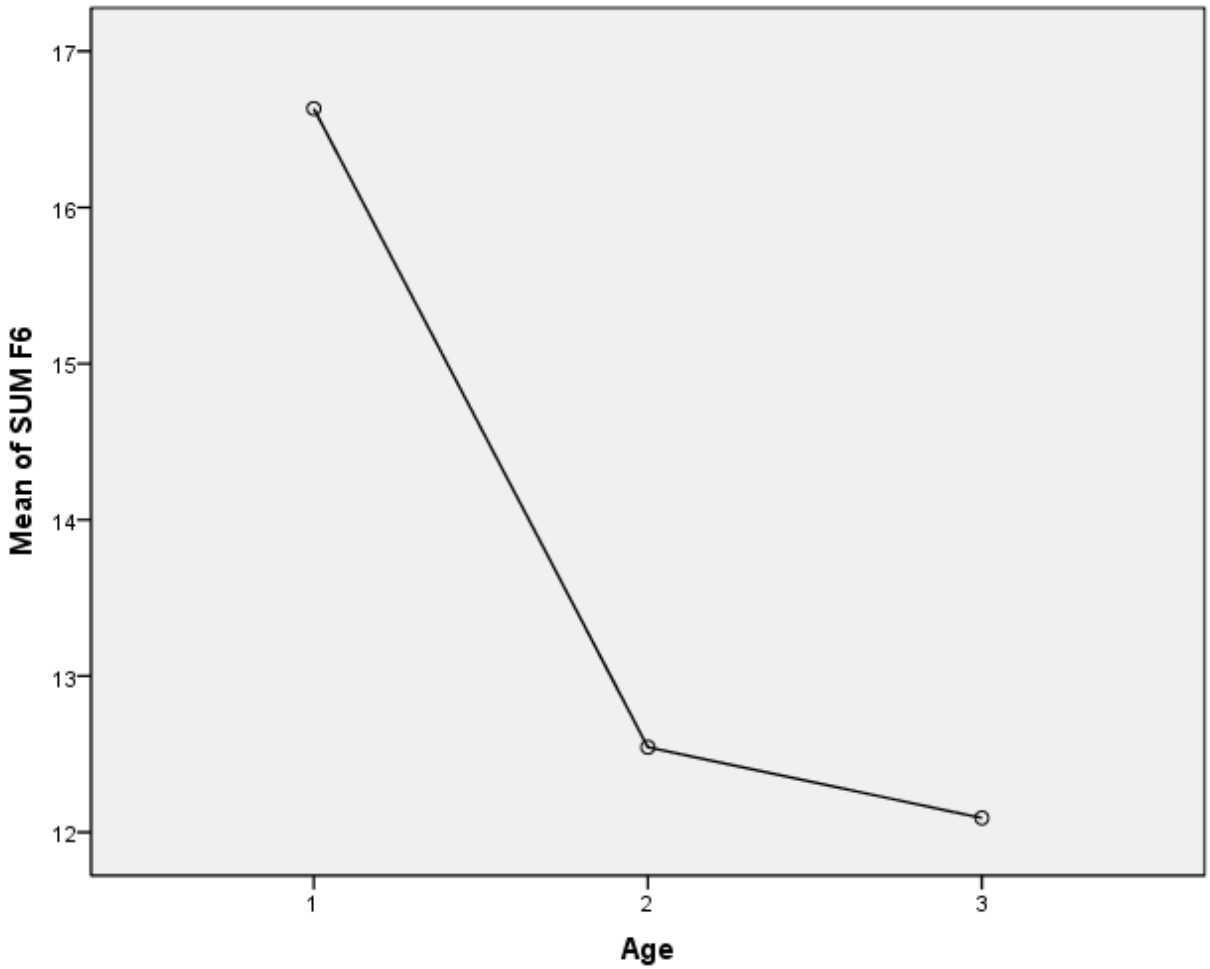
Tukey HSD[a,b]

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
3	44	12.09	
2	331	12.54	
1	30		16.63
Sig.		.841	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 50.777.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.


17
16
15
14
13
12
Mean of SUM F6
1
2
3
Age

Appendix Q

Study 2b – SPSS ANOVA Outputs - Socio-Economic Status

SES – Factor 1

Descriptives

SUM F1

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	42	67.98	9.180	1.416	65.12	70.84	51	85
2	223	69.12	8.032	.538	68.06	70.18	48	91
3	121	70.75	9.295	.845	69.08	72.43	53	92
100	19	68.84	10.553	2.421	63.76	73.93	49	89
Total	405	69.47	8.686	.432	68.63	70.32	48	92

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F1

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2.129	3	401	.096

ANOVA

SUM F1

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	327.945	3	109.315	1.454	.227
Within Groups	30151.033	401	75.190		
Total	30478.978	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F1

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	1.273	3	64.397	.291
Brown-Forsythe	1.209	3	92.044	.311

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F1

Tukey HSD

(I) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	(J) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-1.140	1.459	.863	-4.90	2.62
	3	-2.776	1.553	.281	-6.78	1.23
	100	-.866	2.397	.984	-7.05	5.32
2	1	1.140	1.459	.863	-2.62	4.90
	3	-1.635	.979	.341	-4.16	.89
	100	.274	2.072	.999	-5.07	5.62
3	1	2.776	1.553	.281	-1.23	6.78
	2	1.635	.979	.341	-.89	4.16
	100	1.910	2.140	.809	-3.61	7.43
100	1	.866	2.397	.984	-5.32	7.05
	2	-.274	2.072	.999	-5.62	5.07
	3	-1.910	2.140	.809	-7.43	3.61

SUM F1

Tukey HSD[a,b]

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
			1
	1	42	67.98
	100	19	68.84
	2	223	69.12
	3	121	70.75
	Sig.		.429

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 44.848.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

SES – factor 2

Descriptives

SUM F2

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	42	42.36	11.924	1.840	38.64	46.07	23	75
2	223	45.52	12.051	.807	43.93	47.11	23	88
3	121	43.92	11.695	1.063	41.81	46.02	23	77
100	19	42.53	14.819	3.400	35.38	49.67	19	74
Total	405	44.57	12.082	.600	43.39	45.75	19	88

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F2

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.475	3	401	.700

ANOVA

SUM F2

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	535.996	3	178.665	1.226	.300
Within Groups	58433.248	401	145.719		
Total	58969.244	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F2

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	1.162	3	65.343	.331
Brown-Forsythe	1.077	3	84.740	.364

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F2

Tukey HSD

(I) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	(J) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-3.159	2.031	.405	-8.40	2.08
	3	-1.560	2.162	.888	-7.14	4.02
	100	-.169	3.338	1.000	-8.78	8.44
2	1	3.159	2.031	.405	-2.08	8.40
	3	1.598	1.363	.644	-1.92	5.11
	100	2.989	2.885	.728	-4.45	10.43
3	1	1.560	2.162	.888	-4.02	7.14
	2	-1.598	1.363	.644	-5.11	1.92
	100	1.391	2.979	.966	-6.29	9.08
100	1	.169	3.338	1.000	-8.44	8.78
	2	-2.989	2.885	.728	-10.43	4.45
	3	-1.391	2.979	.966	-9.08	6.29

SUM F2

Tukey HSD[a,b]

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
			1
	1	42	42.36
	100	19	42.53
	3	121	43.92
	2	223	45.52
	Sig.		.602

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 44.848.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

SES – Factor 3

Descriptives

SUM F3

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	42	41.19	6.564	1.013	39.15	43.24	29	53
2	223	41.69	5.809	.389	40.92	42.45	24	56
3	121	41.75	6.665	.606	40.55	42.95	26	58
100	19	40.84	6.131	1.406	37.89	43.80	30	51
Total	405	41.61	6.151	.306	41.01	42.22	24	58

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F3

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.567	3	401	.197

ANOVA

SUM F3

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	22.320	3	7.440	.195	.899
Within Groups	15263.591	401	38.064		
Total	15285.911	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F3

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	.184	3	65.773	.907
Brown-Forsythe	.185	3	124.853	.907

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F3

Tukey HSD

(I) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	(J) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.496	1.038	.964	-3.17	2.18
	3	-.562	1.105	.957	-3.41	2.29
	100	.348	1.706	.997	-4.05	4.75
2	1	.496	1.038	.964	-2.18	3.17
	3	-.066	.697	1.000	-1.86	1.73
	100	.844	1.474	.940	-2.96	4.65
3	1	.562	1.105	.957	-2.29	3.41
	2	.066	.697	1.000	-1.73	1.86
	100	.910	1.522	.933	-3.02	4.84
100	1	-.348	1.706	.997	-4.75	4.05
	2	-.844	1.474	.940	-4.65	2.96
	3	-.910	1.522	.933	-4.84	3.02

SUM F3

Tukey HSD[a,b]

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
			1
	100	19	40.84
	1	42	41.19
	2	223	41.69
	3	121	41.75
	Sig.		.898

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 44.848.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

SES – Factor 4

Descriptives

SUM F4

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	42	17.10	4.333	.669	15.75	18.45	10	30
2	223	19.86	5.203	.348	19.17	20.55	11	35
3	121	19.88	4.687	.426	19.04	20.73	8	36
100	19	20.11	4.999	1.147	17.70	22.51	13	29
Total	405	19.59	5.015	.249	19.10	20.08	8	36

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F4

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.273	3	401	.283

ANOVA

SUM F4

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	293.299	3	97.766	3.973	.008
Within Groups	9866.479	401	24.605		
Total	10159.778	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F4

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	4.937	3	67.709	.004
Brown-Forsythe	4.300	3	113.325	.007

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F4

Tukey HSD

(I) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	(J) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-2.766*	.834	.006	-4.92	-.61
	3	-2.789*	.888	.010	-5.08	-.50
	100	-3.010	1.371	.126	-6.55	.53
2	1	2.766*	.834	.006	.61	4.92
	3	-.023	.560	1.000	-1.47	1.42
	100	-.244	1.185	.997	-3.30	2.81
3	1	2.789*	.888	.010	.50	5.08
	2	.023	.560	1.000	-1.42	1.47
	100	-.221	1.224	.998	-3.38	2.94
100	1	3.010	1.371	.126	-.53	6.55
	2	.244	1.185	.997	-2.81	3.30
	3	.221	1.224	.998	-2.94	3.38

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

SUM F4

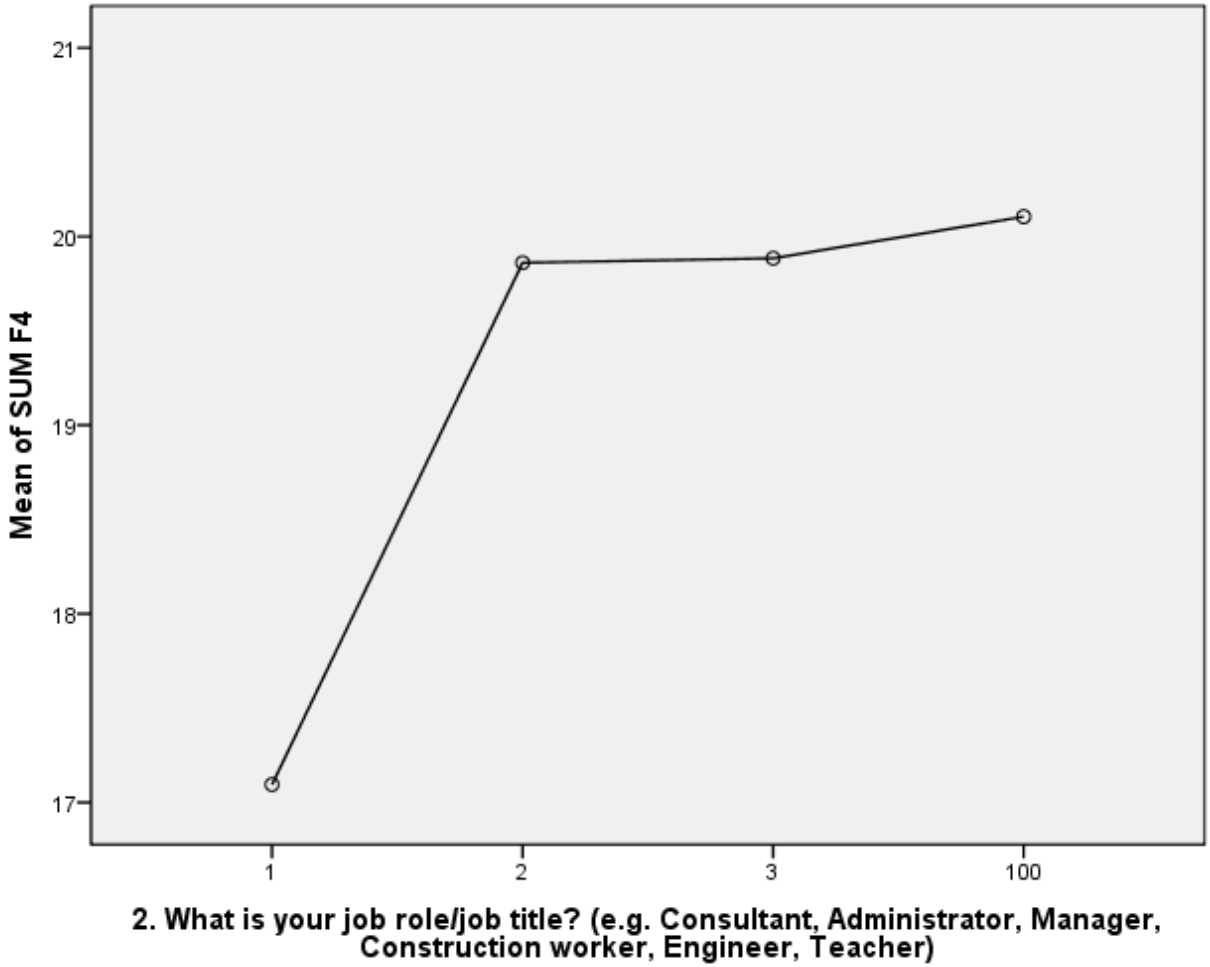
Tukey HSD[a,b]

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
			1	2
	1	42	17.10	
	2	223		19.86
	3	121		19.88
	100	19		20.11
	Sig.		1.000	.996

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 44.848.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.


Mean of SUM F4
21
20
19
18
17
1
2
3
100
2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)

SES – Factor 5

Descriptives

SUM F5

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	42	17.36	3.145	.485	16.38	18.34	11	25
2	223	18.21	2.929	.196	17.82	18.59	11	30
3	121	17.74	3.041	.276	17.19	18.28	12	27
100	19	18.11	3.635	.834	16.35	19.86	13	28
Total	405	17.97	3.023	.150	17.68	18.27	11	30

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F5

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.268	3	401	.849

ANOVA

SUM F5

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	35.221	3	11.740	1.287	.278
Within Groups	3657.481	401	9.121		
Total	3692.701	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F5

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	1.235	3	64.942	.304
Brown-Forsythe	1.108	3	90.742	.350

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F5

Tukey HSD

(I) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	(J) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.849	.508	.340	-2.16	.46
	3	-.378	.541	.897	-1.77	1.02
	100	-.748	.835	.807	-2.90	1.41
2	1	.849	.508	.340	-.46	2.16
	3	.471	.341	.512	-.41	1.35
	100	.101	.722	.999	-1.76	1.96
3	1	.378	.541	.897	-1.02	1.77
	2	-.471	.341	.512	-1.35	.41
	100	-.370	.745	.960	-2.29	1.55
100	1	.748	.835	.807	-1.41	2.90
	2	-.101	.722	.999	-1.96	1.76
	3	.370	.745	.960	-1.55	2.29

SUM F5

Tukey HSD[a,b]

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
			1
	1	42	17.36
	3	121	17.74
	100	19	18.11
	2	223	18.21
	Sig.		.543

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 44.848.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

SES – Factor 6

Descriptives

SUM F6

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	42	11.67	3.804	.587	10.48	12.85	6	24
2	223	11.69	3.709	.248	11.20	12.18	5	22
3	121	15.03	4.365	.397	14.25	15.82	5	24
100	19	14.11	3.725	.855	12.31	15.90	8	21
Total	405	12.80	4.207	.209	12.39	13.21	5	24

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

SUM F6

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2.106	3	401	.099

ANOVA

SUM F6

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	966.380	3	322.127	20.892	.000
Within Groups	6183.017	401	15.419		
Total	7149.398	404			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

SUM F6

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	18.553	3	66.674	.000
Brown-Forsythe	21.129	3	135.125	.000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Multiple Comparisons

SUM F6

Tukey HSD

(I) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	(J) 2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.019	.661	1.000	-1.72	1.68
	3	-3.366*	.703	.000	-5.18	-1.55
	100	-2.439	1.086	.113	-5.24	.36
2	1	.019	.661	1.000	-1.68	1.72
	3	-3.347*	.443	.000	-4.49	-2.20
	100	-2.419	.938	.050	-4.84	.00
3	1	3.366*	.703	.000	1.55	5.18
	2	3.347*	.443	.000	2.20	4.49
	100	.928	.969	.774	-1.57	3.43
100	1	2.439	1.086	.113	-.36	5.24
	2	2.419	.938	.050	.00	4.84
	3	-.928	.969	.774	-3.43	1.57

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

SUM F6

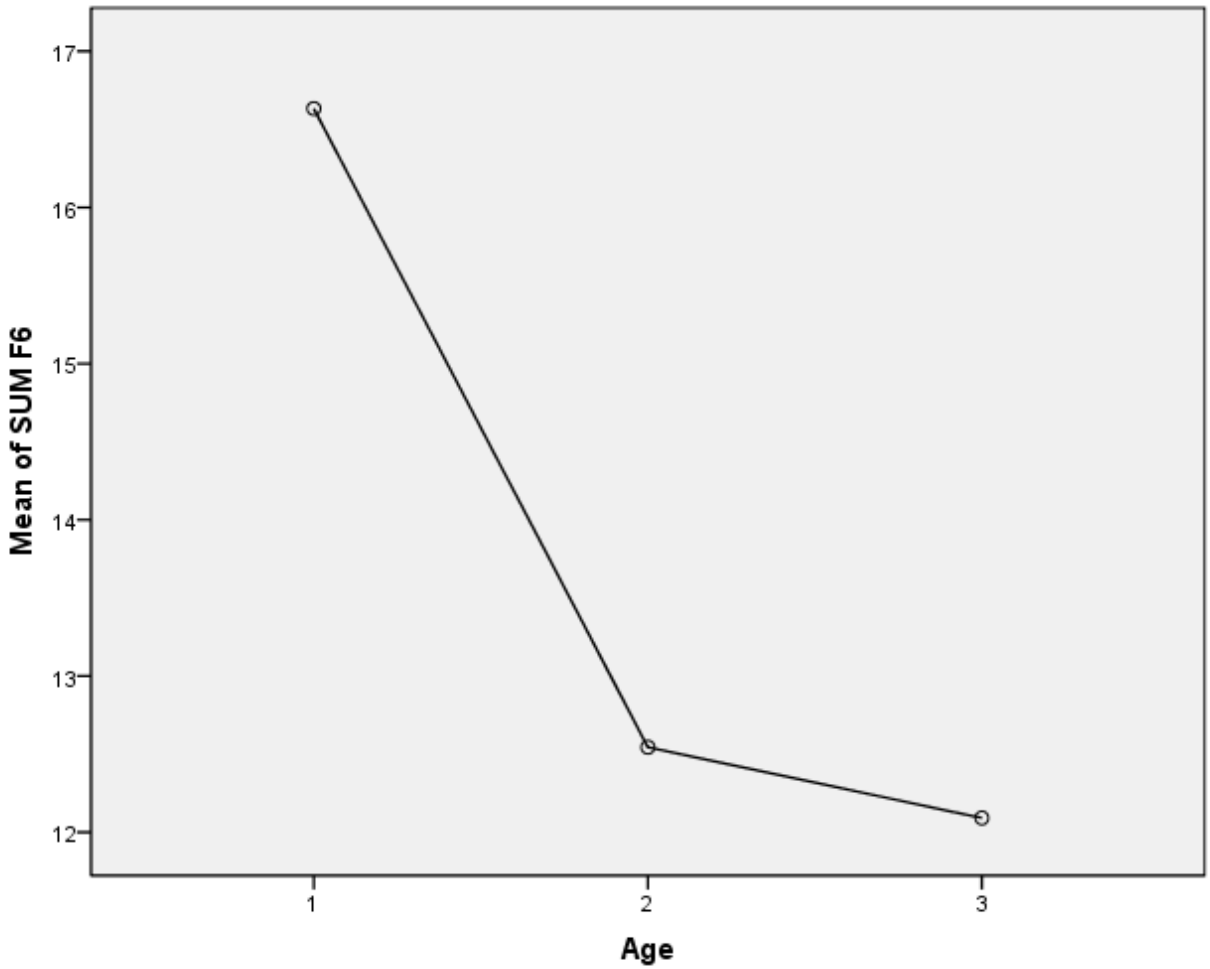
Tukey HSD[a,b]

2. What is your job role/job title? (e.g. Consultant, Administrator, Manager, Construction worker, Engineer, Teacher)		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
			1	2
	1	42	11.67	
	2	223	11.69	
	100	19		14.11
	3	121		15.03
	Sig.		1.000	.678

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 44.848.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.


Mean of SUM F6
17
16
15
14
13
12
1
2
3
Age

Appendix R

Study 2b – SPSS T-test Output – Gender

T-tests – Gender

Factor 1

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SUM F1	1	249	69.18	8.542	.541
	2	155	69.93	8.946	.719

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SUM F1	Equal variances assumed	.461	.498	-.841	402	.401	-.748	.890	-2.498	1.001
	Equal variances not assumed			-.832	315.335	.406	-.748	.900	-2.518	1.022

Factor 2

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SUM F2	1	249	44.65	11.491	.728
	2	155	44.39	13.025	1.046

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SUM F2	Equal variances assumed	6.802	.009	.210	402	.834	.259	1.238	-2.175	2.694
	Equal variances not assumed			.204	296.198	.839	.259	1.275	-2.249	2.768

Factor 3

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SUM F3	1	249	41.51	5.860	.371
	2	155	41.71	6.564	.527

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SUM F3	Equal variances assumed	1.740	.188	-.318	402	.751	-.200	.628	-1.434	1.035
	Equal variances not assumed			-.310	298.998	.757	-.200	.645	-1.469	1.070

Factor 4

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SUM F4	1	249	19.18	4.642	.294
	2	155	20.26	5.527	.444

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SUM F4	Equal variances assumed	8.031	.005	-2.106	402	.036	-1.077	.512	-2.083	-.072
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.023	284.869	.044	-1.077	.533	-2.126	-.029

Factor 5

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SUM F5	1	249	18.10	3.068	.194
	2	155	17.78	2.959	.238

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SUM F5	Equal variances assumed	.095	.758	1.020	402	.308	.316	.310	-.293	.924
	Equal variances not assumed			1.028	335.670	.305	.316	.307	-.288	.920

Factor 6

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SUM F6	1	249	11.88	3.654	.232
	2	155	14.30	4.600	.369

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
S U M F 6	Equal variances assumed	17.801	.000	-5.835	402	.000	-2.413	.414	-3.226	-1.600
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.534	272.641	.000	-2.413	.436	-3.272	-1.555

Appendix S

Study 3 – Ethics Approval Information

Quality of Working Life – Defining Influences, Cultural Change and Business Benefits

Purpose of Project and Rationale

QoWL has been the subject of much past enquiry generating an extensive number of potential influencing variables at the individual and organisational levels. However, as highlighted in Dame Carol Black's review *'Working for a Healthier Tomorrow'* (2008) many businesses still fail to see the benefits of investing in the QoWL of their employees. The breadth and complexity of variables identified in research into this issue, combined with limited steer on good practice from the State, employers' bodies and human resources associations is widely held to contribute to inertia in this area. The central purpose of the current thesis is to devise a sharper focus on key contributory variables and the scope for employer action.

A grounded approach was adopted for study 1 in order to cut through the morass of at times conflicting research evidence by focusing on employee accounts. To date, the research activity e.g. Hackman and Oldham (1975), Efraty and Sirgy (1990), Lau (2000) has been methodologically 'top down' exploratory and correlation, based on managerial and academic intuitions and theoretical models over what is important to employees. As such, these studies presume to know what the right questions are to ask, with limited ecological grounding rooted in the views of employees. Many studies have also been focused on single businesses or single sectors e.g. Graen et al, 1977, DeJoy et al, 2010 which may raise questions over the generalisability of findings. The current research seeks to address these limitations.

A central hypothesis is that there will be a set of factors that enhance or erode QoWL. The methodology selected is aimed at identifying what these factors might be and the extent to which they can be considered universal.

The organisations engaged in Study 1 were an Ambulance Service, a fire and rescue service, a recruitment consultancy, a mining company and a mixed group including teachers, consultants and an entrepreneur. The range of job roles of those involved was also varied, including administrators, managers, team leaders, senior managers, miners, dock workers, trainees

consultants, consultants and senior consultants, paramedics, fire fighters, support workers, technicians and directors.

The second study built upon the key themes identified in study 1 with the aim of exploring and refining these insights with a large sample of respondents, and an element of confirmation of findings from Study 1. Initial Factor Analysis and reliability tests suggest that the factors drawn from the survey do support the findings of the first qualitative enquiry.

The third study proposed here aims to test perspectives on the relative salience of variables identified as contributing to QoWL in studies 1 and 2. It is important to establish this in order to inform thinking over the scope for developing a generic organisational psychometric QoWL measure, and to establish the disjuncture between managerial and employee perspectives identified in previous studies.

Objectives:

1. To develop a self complete paired comparison study that will produce a ranking of employee judgements of the relative salience of variables contributing to QoWL.

2. To explore the degree of demographic homogeneity in rankings of employee judgements of variables contributing to QoWL

3. To derive a ranking from a sample of managers on the relative salience of variables which they believe contribute to employee QoWL

4. To compare 1 & 3 above

Generation of items for comparison

Paired comparison scaling as a method was developed by Thurstone (1927) and aims to establish a scale of items that share common characteristics using judgements of difference between items. In essence, the technique seeks to give each item a 'value' on a scale of related items. Items are presented in pairs and in the proposed study the respondent will be asked to select which item of a pair (for all permutations of pairings) has greater impact on their quality of working life. . The respondents' choices in each case will be recorded in a matrix and when all responses are collected the order assigned in each case will be compared to establish if there

is parity between the relative 'value' respondents have assigned to items. Coefficients of concordance (Kendall's W) and consistency (Kenadall's *k*) will be formally calculated.

It is planned that the items for comparison will be designed on the basis of the interpretation of findings from studies 1 and 2, with the addition of two or three additional items drawn from empirical insights from the literature. Eight or nine variables is generally considered maximal for a complete paired comparisons design.

Items will be reviewed and refined by peers and a small cognitive pilot conducted. The final paired comparison study will be piloted, reviewed/amended in response to the pilot and then distributed. Results will be compared to expert ratings and inconsistent respondents removed from the data set. Frequency tables of the remaining responses will be constructed and group means calculated and standard deviations derived. Group results will be compared using analysis of variance.

Method

The approach to sampling will mirror that adopted in previous studies undertaken as part of this thesis. Any and all ethical consideration are deemed to be equivalent those approved for the survey conducted in study 2.

It is intended that the paired comparison study will be distributed and completed online using a bespoke online software package designed for such a study set up and that will enable results to be exported into MSExcel / SPSS for analysis.

The Sample

The study will be distributed via a web link to those organisations that participated in study 1 as this first study benefited from a range of organisations different in character (see Sample characteristics table above) and size and also from public and private sector domains and it is hoped that the same breadth of sample will be achieved in this second study.

In order to maximise the likelihood of obtaining the required number of responses to ensure statistically significant results the researcher will put together a communication for each organisation requesting volunteers to participate to raise awareness of the study and its purpose. All participants will be volunteers recruited through an email sent out by the researcher following the successful negotiation of access to staff email addresses with each organisation. The email to potential participants will stress that their participation is voluntary; also detail how the results will be kept confidential and the level of feedback that will be given to their organisation whilst maintaining respondent confidentiality, i.e. the organisation will only

receive summary results which preclude the indemnification of any individuals. This will also be reiterated in the study instructions respondents will see when they first enter the online tool. Other organisations, identified through the researchers wider network of and new contacts made in the course of research so far, will also be invited to participate in the study. These organisations include John Lewis Partnership, Thales Group, UK Coal, and West Berkshire Council.

All respondents will be over 18 years old. A minimum realised sample of 250 will be aimed for so that the data collected can be interrogated via a range of demographic criteria e.g. age group, gender, job grade, length of service and employment sector.

Consent

All respondents will be volunteers. All participant organisations will be informed that participation by their employees is both voluntary and confidential. Consent will be given by respondents choosing to complete the study once they have read the introductory brief informing them that participation is voluntary, responses confidential and they have the right to withdraw at any time.

Participants will be informed of the purpose of the study prior to commencing it and thanked for their responses at the end of the study.

Ethical considerations

Due to the fact that participants will be fully informed of the nature of the study prior to participation as well as the fact that participation is completely voluntary means that ethical considerations are modest. Furthermore, the nature of the study is unlikely to cause psychological distress to participants added to which, participants will be fully informed of their right to withdraw, without giving any reason, from the study at any time should they no longer wish to proceed. Taking this into account, the key ethical considerations will be; (i) ensuring participant anonymity which will be done through administering the study online. Also, there is no need for participants to give their name which will further increase their sense of anonymity; (ii) ensuring participants are engaging with the study as volunteers, which will be done by giving the participant direct access to the study through a link so this is not in any way managed by the organisation, but purely by the researcher; (iii) a global email will be sent to all participating organisations after the study has been completed with some feedback and the key findings; (iv) providing researcher contact details at the end of the study so that if participants would like further feedback on the results they can contact the researcher at a later date and totally independent of their responses to get this.

Estimated start and duration of project

Estimated start date for the cognitive pilot is 6th August 2012. The pilot is expected to commence one week later and the actual study expected to be ready for release by 20th August 2012. The study will be live for four to six weeks putting the study estimated end date at 1st October 2012.

Appendix T

Study 3 – QoWL Construct Definitions: Cognitive Pilot

Paired Comparisons Items Response Sheet 1

"I am going to read you eight items in turn, each of which represent one aspect of quality of working life. When I read the statement to you, please describe to me what that item means to you. This study is about your interpretation of the items, so that I can understand if they are the right terms to use in my final study. There are no right or wrong answers, I am interested in your views. Thank you for your time."

1) Reward, Recognition and Fair Treatment.

2) Relationship with your Manager.

3) Development and Training.

4) Flexible working arrangements.

5) Job satisfaction.

6) Balance between work and home life.

7) Pay and benefits.

8) Supportive colleagues who get along well.

Paired Comparisons Items Response Sheet 2

"I am going to read you eight descriptions of different aspects of quality of working life. In each case, I would like you to tell me what title each description would fit under in you view. There are no right or wrong answer, I am interested in hearing your interpretation of each description. Your comments will help me to ensure that the items I include in my final study do accurately reflect the area of quality of working life they relate to. Thank you for your time."

1) Hard work is recognised and rewarded by the organisation. Employees are treated fairly regardless of their position in the organisation.

2) Manager/Supervisor supports their staff and works with them to maximise their potential. Manager/Supervisor – Employee communication is good and reasonable expectations are set.

3) There is a strong emphasis on staff development within the organisation and training and development needs of staff are monitored and acted upon.

4) Employees have choice about how they organise their working day and can work flexible hours/shifts when needed.

5) Employees get a sense of satisfaction and achievement in doing their job.

6) Employees do not feel under pressure to work long hours and are able to 'switch off' at the end of the working day. There is little/no conflict in balancing work and home life.

7) The organisation pays people fairly for an honest day's work. Benefits, including sick pay, are appropriate and relevant to the employee.

8) Colleagues help and support each other and get along well at work.

Appendix U

Study 3 – Paired Comparison - Case V Formulae

Analysis of Results

Calculation of (within respondent) Internal Consistency (*K*)

K value formula:

Sum of squares of row sums

(R-r)2=∑R2N(N-1)24

Where *R* = row sum (the number of times an item was selected as more salient that its comparison item), *r* = mean of *R*, *N* = number of items in set which then relates to the coefficient of consistence *k* calculation:

K =12∑(R-r)2N(N2-1)

Chi² test formula:

χ^2=8N-414C^N_3-d+12+df

Where;

N=9

df=NN-1(N-2)(N-4)²

C^N_3=N!3!N-3!

Calculation of Between Respondent Concordance (*W*)

Tied ranks *T* formula:

T=∑(t³-t)12

Sum of squares of rank sums S formula:

S=∑Rj-∑RjN²

Where:

Rj = the rank sum of the *j*th individual

Coefficient of concordance *W* formula:

$W=S1/12m^2(N3-N)-m\sum T$

Where:

m= number of respondents

Chi² formula to test for significance:

$\chi^2=mN-1W$

Where;

m= number of response sets

N=Number of items

W=concordance